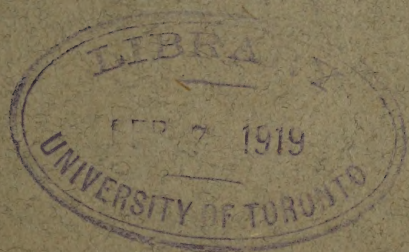


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A STUDY OF  
EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS  
IN MEXICO

AND AN APPEAL FOR AN  
INDEPENDENT COLLEGE













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Conditions in Mexico



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## FOREWORD

IT is fair to say that everyone wants to help Mexico, but that no one at present knows how to do it. We can not expect to help her effectually until we first understand her history and institutions, her people and their aspirations. What, then, does the history of Mexico teach us? What is the meaning of the series of revolutions which have been going on in that country for the last hundred years? In other words, what have the Mexicans accomplished, and what do they now want? These revolutions, including this last long one, have all, at bottom, been phases of a blind, misguided struggle of a strong, ignorant people for liberty. They have sprung from a desire of the common people to realize the benefits of democracy. They have been a struggle against a feudal system approaching slavery. They were chiefly, although not entirely, the strivings of an oppressed people to win for themselves and their children a small place upon the soil of their native land.

These blind efforts have failed of their ends largely because the people have been without learning and without true leaders. There has never been a middle class in Mexico to supply leaders for the people in their struggles with the feudal lords. Organized public opinion is the only basis for democratic government, and this has never existed in Mexico. The only newspapers are controlled by the Government, by the landlords, or by the big corporations. There are no real political parties. The only politics are wholly personal, and the only political organizations are gangs formed to advance the interests of leaders whose names they bear. There are no political campaigns to educate the voters, but only processions and rallies intended to impress them. There is, in fact, no free political discussion of any kind. Elections in Mexico, consequently, are either farces or frauds.

Organized public opinion and the free discussion of political affairs so necessary to free government can not exist where the

masses of the people are ignorant. The only solution of the Mexican problem, therefore, will be the establishment of public schools which will educate the people to know their rights, and of colleges to train men to help them in their struggles to win those rights.

In the belief that the best thing the friends of Mexico can do at the present time is to prepare to assist her in educating her people, a Committee was formed a year ago for the purpose of studying the educational conditions and needs of the country. The following paper was prepared under the direction of this Committee by George B. Winton (now of Vanderbilt University, but for thirty years a teacher in Mexico,) with some assistance from Professor Andrés Osuna, formerly superintendent of schools of Coahuila and at present general director of primary, normal, and preparatory education in the Federal District of Mexico. Several of the notes were contributed by Professor Ezequiel A. Chávez, formerly President of the National University of Mexico and Assistant Secretary of the Department of Public Instruction. We are indebted to Professor I. J. Cox, of the University of Cincinnati, for revising the material thus collected and contributing additional matter.\* For those who can not read the whole paper at once, the chapter summaries and "Afterword" will, we hope, prove helpful in giving a general view of the educational conditions in Mexico and our recommendations for their improvement.

CHARLES WILLIAM DABNEY, *Chairman.*

Cincinnati, Ohio, December 1, 1916.

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\*Notes contributed by Professor Chávez are signed "E. A. C."; those by Professor Cox, "I. J. C."



## I — RACIAL SETTING

### *Summary*

Conditions in Mexico cannot be understood without a study of ethnology. The Nahua peoples—Toltecs, Chichimecs, and Aztecs—came from the north by the west, and displaced an earlier race, perhaps the Mayas. The Nahua records were destroyed by the Spaniards; but we suppose their origin to have been Asiatic. They are oriental in type of mind and in physique. The Aztecs were the leaders for only a century or two. As a warlike tribe they developed a system of bloody religious rites. It was not really typical, as Mexicans are not sanguinary in their tastes. The line between “nobles” and “plebeians” was the most noteworthy social phase of native life. Agriculture flourished. The Conquest introduced new racial influences and two new classes, *mestizos* and creoles. The Spanish settlers took possession of people and lands. Education was left to the Church. Doubt was entertained at first whether the Indian could be educated. There was no attempt at education by the Government. The Spanish Crown and the superior authorities in the Church made provision for the protection of the Indians. These measures were brought to naught by the avarice of the colonists. *Repartimientos* and *encomiendas* were intended for the good of the natives, but resulted only in their oppression and the enrichment of the colonists.

ANY study of educational conditions in Mexico must take account of the racial history of the Mexican people. Not only is that history without a parallel, but there is no phase of the people’s life that does not throw the student back upon the extraordinary intermingling of race currents at and before the Conquest, and the influence which those currents have exerted upon each other and upon the mass during the succeeding centuries. The ideals and practices for the training of the young, which have prevailed during the six centuries of Mexico’s recorded history, have been the outgrowth of the social, military, and governmental standards existing first among the native tribes, and later modified by the coming of the Spaniards. A rapid review of these racial elements and tendencies will serve, therefore, to give the setting for our examination of the present educational status.

The Nahua peoples, who displaced an earlier stock—believed by many to be represented now by the Mayas of Yucatan and

Central America—had been in possession of the Mexican plateau, according to their own records and estimates, some six or seven centuries before the coming of the Europeans. They had themselves arrived in three successive migrations, or had, at least, been dominated by three successive groups or tribes—the Toltecs, the Chichimecs, and the Aztecs. The Aztecs were in power at the time of the Conquest. Vigorous tribes of cognate stock lay just outside the sphere of their control—the Tarascos, the Huastecs, the Mixtecs, the Zapotecs, and others.\*

On the question of their origin a word or two may be ventured. While the elaborate theories and speculations which have been a favorite diversion of students of Mexican history are in the main far from convincing, one must allow that there is much in the way of justifiable inference pointing to an Asiatic origin for these peoples. The physical resemblance which is still marked and detailed, is re-enforced by mental and spiritual traits suggesting, let us say, a kinship between the Mexicans and the people of Japan or of China, rather than with any race of Europe.† It is scarcely too much to say, indeed, that one outstanding phase of Mexico's long and tragic history, has been the inability of the European mind to sound the distinctively oriental processes of Mexican thinking. To this day there is an ever-present menace of tragedy in the forced contact of the American people, intellectual heirs as they are of Northern Europe, with the Mexicans, whose aboriginal orientalism was but slightly tintured by contact with Spain, and that at a time when Spain herself had for centuries been sitting at the feet of Arab schoolmasters. The writer of these lines is beset by daily reminders, spread before us in the pages of American periodicals, of the inability of Americans to understand Mexico and the Mexicans. It is

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\*The statement that Toltecs, Chichimecs, Aztecs, Tarascos, Huastecs, Mixtecs, Zapotecs, and others were tribes of cognate stock is, perhaps, questionable. Distinguished scholars have reached the conclusion that the term "Chichimecs" was a word used only for characterizing a cultural stage.—E. A. C.

†The Japanese and Chinese are very dissimilar peoples, considered ethnically, so this kinship can be suggested merely for comparative purposes. There is absolutely no evidence of any direct connection between either the Chinese or Japanese and the Mexicans. It must be noticed, besides, that there are in Mexico many ethnical groups of different Indians, and that to this day the mental traits of all of them are a subject only of literary discussion, not of scientific definition.—E. A. C.



so grotesque that it is comic, yet behind the mask of Comus grins still the threat of tragedy.

The Mexicans resemble physically the Japanese. They have the small feet and hands, the long bodies, the wide faces and prominent cheek bones, which mark the people of Nippon. Along with these physical resemblances may be traced moral likeness. There is in the two people the same astounding indifference to death; in both may be found the same mixture of gloomy fatalism and childlike good cheer, the same easy complaisance coupled with invincible obstinacy, the same subtle unanimity in their mental processes, invisible and incomprehensible to the onlooker, the same estheticism and warm-heartedness linked with childish ferocity, the same unbending and deathless loyalty. The question is often asked whether the Mexicans are not "very treacherous." The suggestion is ridiculous. They are almost criminally loyal.

The hegemony of the Aztecs was a matter of two or three centuries, more or less, preceding the advent of the Spaniards. They had forced themselves to the front by sheer fighting ability. Once a weary and dilapidated tribe, they had found refuge on a rocky island of the salt and marshy lake of Texcoco, where for a time they eked out a scanty subsistence by fishing, hunting, and marauding. When later their numbers had increased, and they had grown skilled in arms, they overthrew the pacific agriculturists round about them and came to dominate the whole beautiful valley. Their warlike life begat a bloody religion, and the worship of Huitzilopochtli, God of War, culminated in human sacrifices—of captives only, at first—and cannibalism. This, though a recent and localized development, impressed itself so on the European invaders that it has ever since colored the conception of the Mexican national character entertained throughout the world. The fact is that the great mass of the Mexican peoples were neither warlike nor bloody-minded, and their religions were agricultural and pastoral in type, far removed from the sanguinary cult of the Aztecs. Indeed, the very fact that the Mexicans in general were farmers and artisans rather than warriors accounts for the sudden rise to power of the Aztec tribe. Some similar phenomena must be the explanation of the hastily abandoned

granaries, houses, and irrigated fields throughout Arizona and New Mexico.

As is usual in such cases, the Aztec conquerors absorbed much of the culture of the peoples whom they dominated. They learned the art of stonework and woodwork, of architecture and city planning. They received the benefits of the expert farming already developed by their predecessors, the planting and cultivation of corn, beans, potatoes, etc., and the reduction of grains to food; also those of the weaving of cotton and other fibers into cloth, of skilled labor in gold, silver, and copper, of fine arts in feather-work and hieroglyphic writing. All these, there is reason to believe, originated before the time of the Aztecs\* of Tenochtitlán, though naturally the Spanish invaders attributed all that they discovered to the people whom they found in power.

This, then, is the situation which faces us at the beginning of our definite knowledge of Mexico. On a high, healthful, and fertile plateau, in the heart of which is a beautiful basin or valley, adorned with jeweled lakes and watched over by sentinel mountains, two of them capped with perpetual snow, has been gathered a group of tribes, henceforth to be known (through mistaken geography) as "Indians." They are in the early stages of civilization, beginning to cultivate the soil, to build villages of the communal type and to organize governments. Divided into jurisdictions that were primarily tribes, they are yet with a few exceptions racially homogeneous. Their several languages are nevertheless distinct from each other, and their separate governments of varying form. They are in a chronic state of antagonism and jealousy among themselves, which often breaks into warfare. Together they make a population variously estimated at from two to four millions.

Although the tribes differed largely among themselves in the matter of social standards and customs, they were all pervaded by one or two aspects of community life. Of these the most important was the line drawn between nobles and

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\*It is doubtful whether the aborigines of Mexico are racially homogeneous. The physical type of the oldest of the tribes, the Otomies, is totally different from that of the Yaquis, the Zapotecs, and the Mayas. Moreover, the linguistic differences are considerable. The language of the Otomies is monosyllabic; that of the other tribes was in the agglutinative period, yet passing into the period of inflexion.—E. A. C.

people. Despite the frequent descriptions and expositions of this social system in which the writings of the chroniclers abound, it is difficult now to trace the conceptions out of which it had grown. It appears to have been a fairly normal case of feudalism, that state of society likely to supervene during the transition of any people from warlike maraudings to settled agriculture and mechanic arts. The war chiefs come to the front through skill in fighting. Their followers in battle remain loyal when the fighting ceases. If they begin to desire lands and villages and strongholds, the chief and his vassals aid each other to secure them. Within a generation or two there is developed an hereditary chieftainship. Then there remains but a step to the permanent distinction between noble and serf.

Some process like this has evidently taken place in Mexico. The event discloses that there was no real foundation for the distinction. The *caciques* were in no essential point superior to or even different from the *macehuals*. Yet since the discrimination was quite in line with what the Spaniards were used to at home, they accepted it as vital and final, and it exercised a far-reaching influence on social institutions long after the Conquest.

As one result of the work of early missionaries among the people of Mexico, a considerable group of native scholars and writers grew up. These men, masters at once of their own and the Spanish language, took great pride in expounding the institutions, customs, history, and glories of their people. With them collaborated not a few of the missionaries, men who had come to understand something of the significance of the native culture, and even to have some measure of tolerance for the native religion. They admitted, at least, that many of the acts of worship belonging to it were of themselves innocent, and they allowed their converts to bring with them into the Christian temples the garlands and dances and music with which those converts had once honored the gods that had been displaced. It is interesting to observe that these native scholars were quite as apt to represent plebeian blood as noble blood, despite the fact that never, to this day, in Mexico, have



the sons of the common people had equal opportunity with those who were looked upon as of better birth.\*

No phenomenon of the social history of Mexico so constantly impresses itself upon the student's attention as this discrimination against the lowly born. Yet nothing is plainer than that there is no physical or moral or intellectual factor in the life of the people themselves that justifies it. It was, nevertheless, both before and after the advent of the Spanish, a stubborn fact—oftener a bitter and an unhappy one. It has left traces in the national character and raised barriers in the national life that have not disappeared to this day. How it affected educational undertakings will appear later.

Following the Conquest there were social developments quite as significant in their future influence as was the political change from autonomy among the native Mexican tribes to government by representatives of the Spanish Crown. For almost a generation after the final victory of Hernando Cortez in 1521 there was no immigration of Spaniards except soldiers and friars. Nothing was more natural than that the soldiers should form alliances with the Mexican women. These were largely women of the plebeian class, and the majority of such unions were irregular. At once there was thus added to the existing population a new element, the *mestizos*, or mixed-bloods, children of Spanish fathers and Indian mothers. Within another generation, when Mexico became a field for investment in mines, plantations, and stock ranches, instead of simply the arena for the exploits of soldiers or the diligence of missionaries, there commenced a more orderly immigration. Spanish citizens arrived, bringing their families. They came, usually armed with concessions granted by the Crown, prepared to take over native lands and mines, and with them native miners and farmers. The children that were born of these Spanish parents added still another clearly defined strain to the population, the *creoles* (*criollos*.) (In English usage this word is often wrongly taken to mean the same as *mestizo*. It means American born, of European parentage.)

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\*The records of Mexico from the time of the political independence do contain, to be sure, names of Indians of pure blood who rose from obscurity to high positions as ministers, generals, professors, deputies, and even presidents of the Republic. Among the best known of these names are those of Jaurez, Mejia, Mendoza, Altamirano, and very recently Huerta.—E. A. C.

Such was the Mexican population at the beginning of modern Mexican history. Consisting originally of various related tribes, made up of nobles and plebeians, it had injected into it the Spanish *conquistadores* and their successors, the non-descript *mestizos*, and the proud creoles. The Spanish invaders themselves were of various classes, but the opportunities of the New World were so many, and its fields of exploitation so wide, that all those who showed any aptitude, whether for politics or business, were able soon to place themselves in positions of advantage. The distinction between noble and serf is everywhere but skin deep, at best, and is easily rubbed out when circumstances are against it. The Spanish soldiers were mostly illiterate peasants. In their contact with the proud and disciplined Indian chieftains they often appeared at a disadvantage. Yet by the power of arms and later of wealth they soon came to be the aristocracy of the New World.

Of interest to our purpose is the attitude toward these various strata of early Mexican society assumed by two groups of the Spaniards, the governing class and the teachers. The alliance between the government then existing in Spain and the authorities of the Catholic Church was a very close one. By common consent the work of educating the new subjects was left to the representatives of the Church. One historian says very bluntly that this was inevitable, since none of the other Spanish immigrants were capable of teaching them letters. This is rather severe, but that the soldiers were mostly illiterate is not open to doubt. The same writer (Icazbalceta) adds that the income of the Government was not sufficient to enable it to establish a system of public schools. On this point his accuracy is less self-evident.\* The speed with which the governing class enriched themselves would indicate that the country did not lack in productiveness. The Crown revenues, however, suffered from a defective system of taxation. From the very beginning a head tax had been laid upon the Indians. The Spanish colonists managed usually

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\*If a system of public schools was not established by the Spanish Crown, the fact must be explained by other reasons than those here suggested. "The primary or elementary school," says Butler, "springing as it does from needs and ideas that are comparatively modern . . . seems but a creature of yesterday." Properly speaking we can say that only during the nineteenth century has education "definitely become a state function."—E. A. C.

to evade such taxation, even after they had become land-owners and exploiters of the wealth of the country. It was still the Indian—the poor man—who carried the load; nor is this condition of things yet properly remedied. Señor Ezequiel Chávez, quoting the study of Don Pablo Macedo on the evolution of Mexican finance, makes the statement that the annual income of New Spain, during the latter period of Spanish control, reached \$20,000,000. At least two-fifths of this, probably a half, was sent to Spain.

In the matter of colonial administration there was remarkable unanimity between the political and ecclesiastical authorities in Spain. The Crown usually accepted the suggestions of the Church in regard to the treatment of the native peoples of the New World. The authorities of the Church, however, from the Pope down, while moved by benevolence and a sincere philanthropy, were often so far afield in their understanding of conditions among the Indians that their dispositions are a queer jumble of beneficent and disastrous provisions. The spiritual status of the low-class Indian was often solemnly discussed. Soldier and missionary alike doubted whether he was, properly speaking, a soul, a rational being. This doubt persisted so long that it crystallized into a phrase. Spaniards, creoles, Indian *caciques*, and most *mestizos* were spoken of as *gente de razón* (rational beings,) a class from which *indigenas*—just plain Indians—were by inference excluded. This sixteenth century psychology has in it a touch of humor, but the scholars of that day took it in all seriousness. It certainly was serious enough for the Indian, for it affected, as we shall see, the provisions that were made for his education, and the system of education thus early introduced affected the whole subsequent history of the nation.\*

While in home affairs there was usually harmony between the political and ecclesiastical powers, friction often arose between their American representatives in the application of orders from Spain. The secular Spaniard, whether an office-holder or a soldier, although usually a devout Catholic and desirous of Christian converts, was primarily interested in the

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\*The somewhat exceptional ability of many Indians for learning was, however, clearly recognized from the very beginning of the Colonial period by such acute observers as Fray Gerónimo Mendieta.—E. A. C.



search for gold. The resources of Mexico (New Spain, it was called) were so fabulous, and riches often came with such ease and suddenness, that men became drunk with greed. This avarice astonished the Indians, and was at times the occasion of sarcastic comment. The plans of the Government, advised by the Church authorities, looked primarily to the Christianizing of the native peoples of Mexico. But in the hands of the colonial administrators and settlers, these plans were often distorted to serve the most selfish interests. If the royal orders were that the lands should be divided among those who had merited well of the Crown, the native people were seized along with the land, and made to work for the new "owner" in virtual slavery. Thus *repartimientos* were abused, and the system had to be abandoned. If a large land-owner had "commended" to him a certain number of Indians, that he might civilize and Christianize them, he promptly enslaved the whole lot, binding them as serfs to his land and preventing them from leaving as long as they were in debt. Thus the *encomiendas* were abused. More than one effort was made to abolish the system. Enlightened missionaries thundered against it. Even viceroys condemned it; and from time to time royal decrees were launched against it. But it was most profitable to the colonists. Many of them were far in the interior. Not seldom the monks themselves were brought to think well of the situation. Were not the Indians submissive? Had they not all received baptism? What could be safer for them than humbly to take the secular as well as the religious orders of their superiors? As for working, that was also good for their souls. Left to themselves they would loaf and gamble and fight.

So the *encomiendas* persisted—in fact, if not in name. The lot of the subjected masses was not called slavery. Men and women were not bought and sold—at least not usually. But they belonged body and soul to the men from over the sea. They were helpless. Their paternal lands had been taken from them, and they had become serfs, if not chattels. Their weakness made resistance of any kind impossible. Their very language faded out, except in secret discourse, and their tribal organizations disappeared; and in all the fertile and desirable

sections of their country they settled down to three hundred years of ignorance and peonage. Some results of this system our further studies will disclose.\*

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\*The condition that succeeded the *encomiendas* may be termed a very bad form of *servitude de la Glèbe*, yet it was better than actual slavery. But there are too many differences in the character of individual landlords and in the physical conditions of different areas to make an accurate designation possible. Considerate proprietors maintained their *haciendas* under a mild paternal regime, side by side with those of a more abusive type. Among such benevolent owners we may mention the renowned Don Melchor Ocampo, late of the state of Michoacán, and Don Olegario Molina, of Yucatán. The benefactions of the latter, according to a contemporary, should be commemorated by a public monument. There are many others of like character. Moreover, in some few localities—Xochimilco, for instance—the Indians retained individual land holdings.—E. A. C.

## II — THE COLONIAL PERIOD

### *Summary*

The early mission work was done by monastic orders, and was educational. They debated how much to teach the Indian. The missions were at first attractive and useful establishments. The *mestizos* increased the number of the lower class, especially in cities. Schools were established to meet the needs of various classes. A university was provided as early as 1551. The Jesuits came in 1572, and soon engaged in educational work. Various institutions followed.

THE work of education in the new world was given over, as pointed out above, to the Church. In Mexico this meant the monastic orders first, chiefly the Franciscans, the Dominicans, and the Augustinians; later came the Jesuits. The missions established among the Indians by the monks of the sixteenth century were largely established for teaching. Nothing else, indeed, was possible. These people needed to learn everything. Some of them were, in their way, not bad farmers. But the coming of the Europeans had introduced farming implements, domestic animals, fruits, vegetables, and grains not before known, about which the Indian had to be informed. Most important of all, he needed to be taught Christian doctrine. He did not need a great deal of this, to be sure, to induce him to accept baptism. That seemed to him a rite innocent enough—a good deal like some of those employed by his own religion. Just what mental reservations he might entertain did not greatly concern the average simple-minded monk. He believed in the efficacy of baptism, *ex opere operato*, and had no doubt that a soul was redeemed for heaven each time that he administered the rite.

Just how much of letters should be taught in these mission schools was a subject of prolonged study and sober discussion. The issues involved were of this sort: Can the Indian with his limited intelligence understand letters? (Facts based on experience soon put this question out of court, though at first it was given great weight.) Again: Of what use will a knowledge of letters be to him? will it not endanger his soul by



teaching him to think and thus to be less submissive in matters of doctrine? will it not make him dissatisfied with his lot, and less desirable as a laborer? This question the land-owners and mine masters urged with an insistence that is perfectly intelligible. Further, why should the common Indian wish to read unless he was to pursue his studies in higher schools? That, of course, was out of the question. He could not be allowed to study theology, for its mysteries were not for such as he. If he learned jurisprudence, it would certainly give him grounds for dissatisfaction with his social and economic status. As for philosophy, it was inconceivable that people so new to the ways of thought could penetrate the mysteries of that recondite subject. Moreover, since there were no periodicals and few books, why should people wish to read, anyhow?

Such questionings, first suggested—it must in all candor be admitted—by some of the leaders of the Church itself, and naturally taken up and urged by the majority of the Spanish colonists, served greatly to cool the zeal of the Franciscan and Dominican missionaries. From the beginning they generally had not believed it worth while to teach girls, and in dealing with the Indians had shown a marked preference for the sons of the nobles. Such primitive institutions as they had built up gradually disintegrated under these attacks. The missions ceased to be centers of teaching, and gradually came to be settlements of indolent monks. These lived off the labor of the Indians in the fields which were an appurtenance to the establishment, said masses, baptized babies, married the young people, buried the dead, and otherwise went through the routine of official duties, but almost completely abandoned their teaching function. This process was hastened and finally consummated when at length the administration of these missions—most of which had now become an asset and not a liability—passed by pontifical order from the monks to the secular priests.

Of the idyllic character of many of these missions, and of the unflagging zeal of not a few of the monks, there is ample evidence. The boys of the community were gathered into the schoolroom and taught the rudiments of letters, along

with the "Christian doctrine," which always had the prime emphasis. In the early mornings and late afternoons, before or after their work in the fields, the men came to the *patio*, or open court, of the school, and also received their instruction. This was even more rudimentary. To the same open-air school came the girls, who were not thought to require anything more than teaching in religion, morals, and household arts. In rare cases provision was made for boarding and lodging students—boys, of course. Mostly, however, the schools held only day sessions. As the Indians were accustomed to gather in settlements about these mission stations, which always occupied eligible and well-watered sites, there was usually no lack of students for the monks who felt moved to teach. These same Indians, under the supervision of the farmer-monks, labored to construct churches, monasteries, granaries, store-houses and fort-like inclosures, and cultivated widely extended glebes. The Indians were attached to their spiritual leaders and teachers, and gave freely of their time and labor. Neither parents nor pupils, however, could be impressed with the need of systematic daily attendance upon the schools. Such regularity did not comport with Indian temperament or habits.

In Mexico City and other centers of population the educational problem early became a pressing one. It was in such centers that extremes of poverty and wealth tended to show themselves. Even before the coming of the Spaniards, Mexico had its rabble. The utter demoralization of the social organism which the Conquest induced greatly increased the number of this proletariat. To it were added in a very few years the greater part of the despised and abandoned offspring of the Spanish soldier and the wretched Indian woman. Many Spaniards even, caught in the meshes of native vice, and especially beguiled by the native drinks, sank to the level of this motley and hopeless throng. Within fifteen years after the occupation of the Government by the Spaniards, the conditions and numbers of this lower class were such, upon the inauguration of the vice-regal system, as to cause grave concern to the first viceroy, and to the early bishops of the new diocese. Their representations, and other reports of the situation of the poor *mestizos*, resulted finally in the issue of a royal edict

in the year 1553 for the opening of an institution of learning for the special benefit of the youths of this class. This was the "college" of San Juan de Letrán.\* In it were taught reading, writing, and Christian doctrine. It received a small income from the royal treasury, and had a charter direct from the Crown. One of the objects of this foundation, as stated in its constitution, was that the young men educated there might become teachers in other schools. It seems thus to have been the forerunner of all normal schools in the New World. In Tlaltelolco, a suburb of Mexico, the Franciscans had already founded a school for Indian boys in 1536, twelve years after the arrival of the first missionaries. The course there was somewhat more extended than in most of them, for to reading, writing, and Christian doctrine were added grammar, Latin, rhetoric, philosophy, music, and medicine. (Arithmetic is not mentioned by the authority here consulted—Icazbalceta.) One singular outcome of this short-lived educational enterprise was the fact that Indian boys educated there came to be the teachers and spiritual guides of creoles and even of Spaniards. (In the social scale of the time the order of precedence was Spaniard, creole, Indian, *mestizo*.) In 1544, after twenty years of work by the missionaries, Bishop Zumárraga, in seeking to secure the translation into the language of the Indians of a certain book of doctrine, gave as his reason that "there were so many of them that could read." Considering that these early missionaries had first to master the native language and then reduce it to writing, it is no small tribute to their zeal and ability that within the space of twenty years they had produced among the Indians a generation of readers.

Among the ecclesiastics who came to Mexico during the first century of Spanish rule were many university men. As the wealth and social status of the colony advanced, these men were the leaders in agitating for the establishment of an institution of learning of high grade. The colonists themselves—whose wealth had rapidly increased, and whose sons, if they secured an education, had either to go to Spain, or send there for private tutors—joined in the demand. In 1551, there-

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\*Cf. Alamán, *Historia de México*, I, 18, note.—I. J. C.



fore, a royal *cédula* was issued ordering the foundation of a "college of all sciences," and in 1553, two years later, the University was formally inaugurated. This was, as will have been noted, the year of the opening of the college of San Juan de Letrán. The Dominicans had been the leaders in urging the establishment of the University, and its administration was at the beginning entrusted to them. Meantime, a lay brother of the Franciscans, Pedro de Gante, had built up a huge primary school for poor boys alongside the monastery of his order in Mexico City.\* A convent school for girls grew up later as the result, also, of his efforts to do something for the sisters of his multitude of boys.

There were a good many other primary schools, all of the same general type, which came into being alongside the various monastic establishments of the different orders. The devotion of wealthy creoles and Spanish colonists often placed in the hands of the orders valuable properties in real estate and vested funds, and the groups of friars multiplied, both within and without the centers of population. Teachers imported from Spain and those who began to be trained in the native institutions came in time to establish a goodly number of private schools of various types. The Government, however, did practically nothing. Even when it occasionally founded a school it at once turned the administration of it over to the monks; the natural result being that the institution soon differed in no wise from the openly ecclesiastical type. The pious sentiments expressed from time to time by the Spanish Crown do not atone for the complete abandonment of all responsibility for the education of the Mexican people. However firmly the kings of Spain might have held the idea that all education should be in the hands of the Church, there could at least be no justification for withholding the financial assistance that might have made the Church efficient. That was before the day of government lay schools, and the theory was almost universally accepted that the training of the young should be left wholly to ecclesiastics, in order to guarantee

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\*He was the pioneer of education in New Spain, if not in the whole New World. In 1522 he founded the first school in Texcoco, and afterwards that of San Francisco in Mexico City. In Michoacán, just in the first decades of the Spanish Conquest, education was successfully started by Bishop Vasco de Quiroga, the founder of the Colegio de San Nicolás.—E. A. C.

that it should be religious. How was it possible for the Government to escape the thought that the people of Mexico were entitled to have some proportion of the enormous sums wrung from them in taxation used in the training of their own sons and daughters? This question still remains a mystery.

Later in the sixteenth century (1572) came the Jesuits to Mexico. Throughout its history and in all the wide geographic range of its activities this order has been identified with the work of education. Its beginnings in Mexico were humble, however, and the expressed intentions of the first representatives were to devote themselves primarily to preaching. But they early secured a hold among the well-to-do of the colonists, who began to urge them to assume responsibility for the education of the sons of the colonists. In spite of this, the first educational enterprise of the order in Mexico was for the benefit of poor boys. This was the foundation of the college of Santa María de Todos los Santos, in 1573, carrying an endowment of ten free scholarships with board and lodging. It was made possible by a donation offered by Dr. Francisco Rodriguez Santos, who at first wished to enter this order and donate to it all his property, but was persuaded by the father superior, Pedro Sanchez, to found instead this college.\*

The same Jesuit father superior, Pedro Sanchez, preached a sermon in favor of the establishment of a theological seminary, and so stirred the laymen who heard him that a group of them formed a board and got together an endowment for such an institution. Thus the Seminary of San Pedro y San Pablo was founded, at the end of the same year, 1573. A little later the Augustinians founded the College of San Pablo; and there began to be no little competition in undertakings of this kind. Provincial seminaries for the training of Indian youths to be missionaries had already been established in different parts of the country. One of these, after suffering numerous vicissitudes, still survives in the Colegio de San Nicolás, now a state school, at Morelia, State of Michoacán, apparently the oldest

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\*It should be observed that the word "college" is used loosely here as the translation of the corresponding Spanish term. This term does not describe such an institution as in modern English is connoted by the word. In the period under review the institutions so called were usually barely above the grade of primary schools, the best of them hardly reaching that of the modern high school.

school with a continuous history in Mexico, and one of the oldest on the American continent. Its chief claim to fame, outside this fact of its antiquity, is that it was the *alma mater* of Father Hidalgo, the Liberator of Mexico. He was also for a time rector of the institution.\*

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\*For a brief summary of a few sporadic efforts to establish a school system in a Spanish frontier *villa* or town, cf. article by I. J. Cox on "Educational Efforts in San Fernando de Bexar," (now San Antonio, Texas), in *Quarterly of the Texas Historical Association*, July, 1902, VI, 27-63. As shown there (pp. 27-35) some little educational leaven was beginning to work among the creole and *mestizo* classes during the last thirty years of Spanish rule. This was, of course, pitifully weak and inconsequential, but its presence should at least be noted.

It is only fair to add that for a small element of the population, composed almost exclusively of high-class creoles, there were cultural advantages of no mean character at the close of the vice-regal period. Public functions at the capital and in other important centers were marked by contests in poetry and oratory. Some of the productions of these contests received recognition in Europe. The Inquisition was active in suppressing what it regarded as objectionable books, but the book-trade in certain publications was flourishing. In the last decade of the eighteenth century a creditable edition of Livy was printed in Mexico City and sold by subscription, and there were other instances of classical authors finding a market in New Spain. Large and well-selected private libraries were reported in the capital and elsewhere. Mexico City boasted of an Academy of Fine Arts, and in 1803 dedicated an equestrian statue of Carlos IV that still arouses artistic enthusiasm. At this same period there was considerable writing of local history. After 1784 periodicals like the *Gaceta de Mexico*, the *Diario de Mexico*, and the *Diario de Vera Cruz* began to publish general as well as governmental and commercial news. In spite of rigorous censorship they exerted a beneficial effect on public opinion and indicated an encouraging amount of general culture among the higher classes. Possibly this manifestation was largely due to the enlightened policy of Carlos III and his subordinates, and much of it disappeared during the succeeding political disturbances; but it must be confessed that the cultural opportunities in Mexico City, on the eve of the struggle for independence, compare favorably with those of any American city at the outbreak of the Revolution.—I. J. C.



### III—PERIOD OF POLITICAL LIBERATION

#### *Summary*

The educational plans of colonial days were inadequate. Political movements for freedom were belated in Latin America. The Napoleonic intervention in Spain gave colonists their opportunity. The revolution was a movement of the plebeian class. The first plan was to set up a "Catholic monarchy" in Mexico, out of reach of Napoleon. Failing this, change was made to republicanism, in emulation of the United States.

SUCH, in rough outline, were the educational provisions with which Spain set out to do her duty by her namesake in the New World. Our purpose does not demand that we should trace through the three hundred years of the viceroyal period the vicissitudes of these educational institutions, the shifting ideals which animated those in control of them, and the varying fortunes of the whole cause of education, as between Church and State, between Crown and colony, *hidalgo* and creole. It will suffice to pass at once to a view of Mexico as that country emerged from the somnolence of colonial days into the stir and bustle of the century of independence.

Mexico attained her political freedom, along with most other Spanish and Portuguese colonies, in the early years of the nineteenth century. This general movement in Latin America resulted from the gradual working of the republican leaven, liberated into the world's thought by the successful dash for independence of the English colonies in America and later by the vast upheaval of the French Revolution. That Latin America (as we have of late come to describe it) was thus fifty years behind the British colonies is an index of the slower rate at which public sentiment is formed and propagated among those peoples than among such as possess a free press and show a high percentage of literacy. The democratic and leveling effects of the Protestant religion, as compared with the emphasis on obedience and submission characteristic of Catholic doctrine, should doubtless also be taken into account.

Something more, however, than the mere dissemination of liberal sentiments and of a desire for national independence and for self-government had to supervene in order that the Spanish-American colonies might achieve their independence. They had been drained of their resources to enrich the mother country. Their peoples, instinctively loyal, had been long trained to submission. The powerful sanctions of religion were invoked to strengthen the hold of civil authority. And Spain was, and had long been, a proud and efficient military power. It was only, therefore, when the nightmare of the Napoleonic cataclysm was upon Europe, and when the Spanish Government, along with many others, had fallen into the hands of the Corsican, that the clock of destiny struck for Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, and the rest. They did not break the shackles that held them to the Old World; the shackles fell away.

In Mexico the culmination came by the working of a queer contradiction, thoroughly characteristic of that anomalous land. For years there had been restlessness on the part of the indigenous peoples. They did not quite know what *independencia* meant, but they were sure that their condition ought to be improved—that, indeed, it could not be worse. So, at last, while the Corsican dominated the mother country, they rose up in a great wave of protest, and under the priest Hidalgo, sweeping all before them, came to the very gates of Mexico City. They could doubtless have taken it by mere weight of numbers, had they gone on. But the heart of the priest-general failed him. He hesitated, then retired. Once the retreat had begun, the vast throng of unarmed, ill-provisioned peasants disintegrated under the blows of a small group of soldiers; and in a few months Hidalgo's head was upon a stake. This was in 1810-11. Guerrilla bands kept the war going. The government policing was inefficient at best. Spain needed all her soldiers and all her attention for affairs at home. Between republicans in his own domain and Napoleonism outside, the lot of the Spanish monarchs was just then far from happy. Even after the allies disposed of Napoleon and were settling the affairs of Europe, they could not save Ferdinand VII of Spain from domestic troubles. The Juntas and the Cortes

were demanding a liberal constitution, freedom of the Government from ecclesiastical control, and reforms of all kinds.

In Mexico, the ragged patriots who had been for ten years warring for independence were opposed by a Government and an Army which represented loyalty to the old order—the Crown and the Church, the Catholic Monarchy of Spain. So when Spain itself appeared about to divest itself of the Catholic king, the happy thought occurred to the loyal leaders overseas to invite him to Mexico to set up a monarchy which should thenceforth be independent of Spain. By this step the demand for independence could be reconciled with loyalty to the Church. The compromise was proposed to the rebels, who, as good Catholics, but desirous of national independence, saw nothing objectionable in it. Thus the two sides came together under the “Plan of Iguala,” and the tri-color flag of independent Mexico was adopted, the red, white, and green signifying the three guarantees of independence, religion, and union. Despite his troubles with the liberals in Spain, however, Ferdinand did not emigrate to Mexico; and though the plan which had been adopted provided for another succession in that event, the ambition of Iturbide, the loyalist leader, led him to assume the position of Emperor of Mexico, and to attempt to set up there an independent kingdom. Republican sentiment was very strong among the Mexicans, however, and Iturbide’s kingdom was of short life. Following it came the adoption of the first republican constitution, that of 1824, which was the beginning of the effort, that still continues in that unhappy land, to establish on the basis of the independence so strangely achieved the rule of the people by the people.



## IV

### CONDITIONS AT BEGINNING OF INDEPENDENCE

#### *Summary*

The prolonged failure of popular government in Mexico was due to the failure of the Colonial system of education. The real people had not been educated. On the contrary, numerous factors had been at work to degrade them. They were victims of all kinds of tyrannies. Wealth came at last to be the social criterion. By its possession or its lack, the people were grouped into higher and lower classes. The matter of blood and race gradually ceased to be of importance.

**A**FTER a hundred years, self-government is yet without assured success in Mexico. It is not too much to say that the principal reason for this is to be found in the failure of early plans for the education of the people. For those devices, undertaken as has been already described, three centuries before, had failed. The priests, the lawyers, the doctors, the sons of wealthy families, had received training, but the people—the creoles, the *mestizos*, the Indians, the masses, or, speaking more exactly, the mass, of the Mexican people—were left in ignorance. The welter of social, political, industrial, and other influences had, indeed, wrought its effects on the common people. Their condition at the beginning of the period of independence was a composite result of these long-exerted forces. But that phase of it which is most outstanding, and which lay most obviously and stubbornly in the road of future political success under republican forms, was their ignorance. Careful estimates indicate that of a population of perhaps 6,000,000, only 30,000 could read and write. This, as will be seen, is exactly one-half of one per cent.

The truth is that there had never been any sentiment in favor of the education of the Indians aside from that exhibited by the very early missionaries. The *mestizos* were almost equally unfortunate. And since even the monks had a most limited conception of what education the Indians required, and since their successors, the secular curates, did not even carry

forward the rudimentary instructions that had at first been undertaken, the outcome of it all was that the bulk of the Mexican population was little better off in the matter of letters at the end of the Spanish dominion than at the beginning.

Meantime, numerous influences had tended to degrade the Mexicans of the lower classes. The very insistence on class distinction had been little short of a calamity. The *caciques* held their subjects in low esteem, as belonging to an inferior order. This discrimination—for which there seems to have been no sort of justification in fact—was accepted by the Spaniards. It was even enforced by them, which was far more serious. They saw no reason why the chiefs should not hold their subjects as slaves, as they had formerly done, though the Spanish Government, through its Council for the Indies, and through the influence of the Church, contended earnestly against anything like enslavement of the Indians. The decrees and dispositions relative to this and similar abuses, still of record in the archives of the Spanish Crown, are greatly to the credit of the Christian monarchs of those days, and to that of the ecclesiastical leaders who were their principal advisers.

But it seemed impossible to devise regulations which the avarice and the arrogance of the colonists could not set aside. The very means of which the Crown availed itself for the Christianizing and protection of the Indians were constantly taken advantage of by the colonial overlords to oppress and enslave them. The *caciques* led the way in domineering cruelty and industrial exploitation, and the Spanish colonists and creoles were apt and willing learners. Were lands distributed to Spanish soldiers and settlers, they seized the people along with them. Indeed, *repartimientos* soon came to be calculated in heads of people, instead of *hectareas* of land. Were the Indians commended to Christian settlers, to be taught and Christianized, the settlers made them work on farms and in mines; and while pocketing the resulting riches, justified themselves by pretending that the Indians were benefited by the discipline. Even the teachers made the natural sloth and backwardness of their Indian pupils a pretext for inhuman floggings, and adopted as one of their chief

principles the common pedagogical saying, *La letra con sangre entra*—*Learning enters through blood-letting*.

In many sections the sternest kind of measures were taken to force the Indians, habituated to solitude and privacy, to live in villages. The extent to which such a regulation would lend itself to abuse never seems to have dawned on the authorities in Spain. They were interested in facilitating the work of evangelization, and, incidentally, the census, for purposes of taxation. Another injustice, which all the humaneness and even tenderness of the regulations concerning the poor natives of the New World failed to atone for, was the odious head tax of one dollar a year, exacted of all Indians from the very beginning. This tax was divided into various funds, only a part of it going directly to the Crown. But the collections of it subjected the Indians to incalculable abuses, and resulted, also, in systematic and lucrative fraud upon the part of the collectors. They falsified the census returns, for example, reporting far fewer Indians than they really had collected from; also, they often managed, by the connivance of the local authorities and otherwise, to increase the amount of the tax itself, to the tribulation of the poor Indians.

These came in time to view with suspicion and uneasiness every measure enforced among them. The King of Spain might mean to be kind, but his laws always worked sorrow for them. There were, as times passed, violent native uprisings in several sections of the country, and more than one prolonged and bloody Indian war. Yet for the most part the natives in the territory of what is now Mexico, were, like their descendants today, uniformly docile and pacific.

As was inevitable from the beginning, the social distinction between classes settled down finally upon the criterion of wealth. The *caciques* came to a more or less ridiculous end. As time went on, every Indian who chanced to be elected *alcalde*, or who received a government appointment of any kind, considered that he was thereby elevated to the class of *cacique*. The hereditary glamour which had continued to cling about certain families came thus gradually to fade. There were *caciques* on every hand, kings of shreds and patches; many of them trying to preserve ancestral dignity, though



living in clay huts, and digging to earn a scanty fare of corn and beans.\*

Many of the descendants of the *conquistadores* were equally unimpressive. Not having taken pains to acquire, or having failed to hold, productive lands or mines that might have given them the enduring power of gold, as against the brief glory of being victors and officers of the Crown, they slid down, along with their *mestizo* descendants, into the great conglomerate mass. The various ingredients making up that mass became year by year more and more indistinguishable. They were fused together in the fire of poverty, they were welded into one under the hammer of persecution. By the time of national emancipation there had thus come into being the vast and fairly homogeneous mass of the Mexican people—five millions of them, more or less. Of these at least nine-tenths belonged to the “lower class.” Aside from a few crude and isolated Indian tribes, left undigested in remote mountainous sections, and the exceptionally depraved substratum in the larger cities, there was no warrant for distinguishing these nine-tenths of the Mexicans from the other tenth as “lower.” The distinction was alike invidious and gratuitous.† *Cacique* was no longer distinguishable from *macehual*; *hidalgo* and *criollo* were jumbled together inseparably; even the despised *mestizo*, now multiplied until he formed half or more of the total population, could no longer be looked down upon. All these elements were present in the “upper class,” as well as in the mass. The Mexican people in blood, at least, was at last one. Its classes differed only in the matter of opportunity, and in those traits resulting from opportunity, or the want of it. This was the situation which the men faced who undertook, a hundred years ago, to follow the lead of their neighbors just to the north in establishing a popular government. Those men, during the stress of a ten years’ war, had been themselves drawn from all the different

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\*The real *caciques* have not wholly disappeared from the Republic, but within the last twenty or thirty years have changed their characteristics. Don Juan Alvarez, a *cacique* of the State of Guerrero, in the middle of the last century, was a zealous patriot, who later became president of the Republic. Today there are remnants of the *cacique* system in such states as Oaxaca and Chiapas.—E. A. C.

†The existence of an immense mass of poor people and of a few rich families was not a new situation for Mexico. The lack of unity in each class, emphasized by differences in education, was the essential fact.—E. A. C.

groups composing the population. Some were of pure Spanish blood, some were Indians, some *mestizos*. They all agreed, in so far as they faced at all the problems involved in their undertaking, that one of the primary steps required would be the education of the people. Ignorance was general and appalling; and citizens of sovereign republics must not be ignorant.

## V—EDUCATION UNDER THE REPUBLIC

### *Summary*

The study of education prior to the founding of the Republic is only a preliminary process. Our chief interest is in what has been done since. Leaders in the movement for independence were, also, partisans of popular education. The constitution of 1824 was not exactly adapted to Mexican conditions. At the very beginning there arose the tense political controversy between Centralists and Federalists. The liberation from Spanish political control was not the final consummation of Mexico's liberty. Spiritual, intellectual, and industrial liberty had yet to be achieved. The Centralists and clericals did not encourage popular education. Their oppressions tended to arouse the people. The liberal party favored education, but was never long in power. The country became greatly impoverished by continuous fighting. This also hindered the development of public education. The burden was upon the States. They shifted it to the *municipios*. For lack of funds, of teachers, inspection, etc., progress was slow. Upon the adoption of the constitution of 1824, and the state constitutions, there followed much scholastic legislation. It was made sterile by repeated revolutions.

FOR our present purpose the preceding exposition of educational and social conditions during and at the close of Mexico's colonial days is merely preliminary. The Mexican people are still engaged, as they have been with deadly earnestness for a century, in the attempt to maintain popular government. It is the educational history which has accompanied this endeavor, not that which preceded it, which will throw most light on conditions now obtaining, and those to be faced in the immediate future. That history, however, more especially during the early decades of the nation's independent life, has been largely typified by the ethnic, social, industrial, and political conditions remaining over as an inheritance from vice-regal days. It has seemed worth while, therefore, to set forth those conditions in this somewhat extended review. Perhaps it is not amiss, also, to draw attention once more to the fact that racial influences had, and still have, much to do with any matter affecting the life of the Mexican people. We, as citizens of the United States, are



without a parallel in experience for the racial history and situation offered by Mexico. In this part of America the nomadic and scattering aborigines gave way so swiftly and so completely before the invasion of their country by European settlers, that they exerted no appreciable effects as an amalgam in the subsequent population. They were not attached to the soil, nor had they developed social, political, or industrial efficiency to a point that would make it possible for them to mingle with and compete with the immigrants. In Mexico all was different. No greater mistake could be made than to judge the "Indians" of that country by the "Indians" who inhabited this.

While it is true, as was pointed out above, that the leaders in those movements which consolidated the political independence of Mexico accepted the principle that the people should be educated, it can not be said that they concerned themselves immediately and actively with this undertaking. Their first problem was the political one. That was both intense and urgent. They were unconscious themselves of how contradictory were their theories, and the facts with which they had to deal. Led by a natural and innocent enthusiasm, they were bent upon following the successful example of the United States, and establishing a universal democracy. They even went so far as to model their constitution by ours, providing for a federation of sovereign states. The American Constitution grew out of the voluntary association of such states, political entities that had had a previous separate existence. The Mexican states, as framed under the new constitution, had had no such history. In a general and loose way as provinces of the larger colony of New Spain, or as dioceses in Church government, they had experienced a quasi-separation from each other. As a matter of fact, the vice-regal government had always been strongly, even autocratically, centralized. For such a situation the American Constitution, a compromise document, qualified by the mutual jealousies of all the component English colonies, and with difficulty agreed to even then, was a manifest misfit.

Equally obvious was the gap between purpose and realization when sovereign citizenship and the responsibility for self-

government were in theory conferred upon an illiterate and untrained mass of five millions of people. A very large proportion of them were serfs. Though freed from the authority of the Spanish Crown, they were still under the heel of land-owners and mine bosses. Three hundred years of virtual slavery had induced in them the servile type of mind. They were contentedly ignorant. They were instinctively submissive. Their religion was a crass superstition. They had no intellectual life, no mental stimulus, no aspirations. If this had been true merely of a small proportion of the total population, it might not have been held serious. But the proportion was large, not small; it was preponderant; it was well nigh the whole.

Almost instantly, moreover, the matter of the enlightenment and training of this ill-prepared citizenship was forced into the background by acute friction among the leaders over politics. The country had been trained for centuries to centralized government, usually an autocratic one. The idealists had wished to get away from the evils of this system, and so the new constitution called for a federation. It was adopted—the first one, of 1824—as a rebound from the autocratic monarchy which Iturbide had attempted to set up. From that day to this, from the close of the first constitutional president's term in 1828 to the revolution of 1913, the struggle between Centralists and Federalists has contributed its full share to the political problems of Mexico. The two parties have at times taken other names, and have had, both of them, many affiliations and associates, but they remain substantially the same. There was much of right and of reason on both sides. One may well regret that the early governmental schedules did not make provision for some recognition of such political training as the Mexican people had hitherto received, instead of following too closely standards set up elsewhere under wholly different conditions. Yet it must be admitted, after all, that the difficulties with which the Mexicans had to contend were inherent. It was impossible that out of elements there existing a free people should be brought into being without travail.

Mexico's troubles did not cease with independence. Her people had to be freed from other restraints besides the political power of Spain. The dominion of ignorance and superstition had to be broken, and the thralldom of an intolerable industrial system annihilated. The Church and the Army from the first instinctively allied themselves with the centralizing tendencies. In this they were backed by the wealthy and aristocratic elements in the population. Against this puissant combination of spiritual, military, and financial powers, the people, like a blind and helpless, but tremendously vital giant, have struggled for a hundred years. It is human nature to cling to one's possessions, and Church and Army and landholders alike held on tenaciously to the special privileges that had come to them in the days of royalty and favoritism. It was forty years after independence came, for example, before the attempt to have a State Church, intolerant of all others, was abandoned. For nearly the same length of time the clergy and the military had special courts of their own (*fueros*,) and were not amenable to the ordinary courts of the land. For the perpetuation of these privileges they fought bitterly. Yet all the time the patriots were struggling to inaugurate equality before the law.\*

This effort to have a State Church in a free republic serves well as an illustration of how slowly the Mexicans themselves came to understand the inherent contradictions between their program and their situation. Other examples are not wanting. And meantime the evils of that situation were at work. No group, for example, would openly oppose the education of the people. Yet it could not have been concealed from the party of privilege that once the common people were led out of this stupor of helpless ignorance, they would also be clothed with power to achieve their ideals. Hence, as may easily be inferred, when the Centralists were in power, not much progress was made in developing popular education. And since that party

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\*Indeed, in a real sense this has not been a popular contest. "The people" as a social entity, with a social conscience, does not exist in Mexico. Such measure of liberty and equality as has come to its inhabitants is the result of a long and weary struggle among strong, audacious leaders, few in number, frequently misinformed, and seldom displaying any unity of purpose among themselves. Yet, up to 1910, they had achieved considerable progress in organizing a certain type of government, roughly adapted to the genius of the people, and in developing the material resources of the country.—E. A. C.



naturally gathered unto itself the enlightened elements of the population, the men who had had experience in holding office and who had studied the science of government, while their opponents were for the most part crudely trained, drawn from the mass of Indians and *mestizos*, men who had forged their way upward from the lower stratum of society, nothing was more natural than that for a good many years the Centralists should be in power most of the time. They held the upper hand till there was time for the training of a generation in the hard school of experience. A thoughtful Mexican historian explains the fact that the liberals were so long in the minority by the skill with which their opponents made every issue a religious question. The people, devoted as they were to the Church, were most reluctant to take sides against the Church leaders, or to help a party which, as those leaders assured them, was bent upon the destruction of religion itself.

During those decades, instead of adjusting themselves to the situation, and incorporating into their program enough of popular measures to hold the good will of the masses, and to deprive their opponents of weapons with which to fight them, the Centralists—with the usual fatuousness of people of that type—went quite to the contrary extreme. The absurd constitution of 1836, the repeated dictatorships of Santa Anna, the arrogance of the army, the loss of Texas and the fiasco of the American war, together with gross financial wastefulness, the neglect of public works, and the impoverishment of an already exhausted country, culminating at last in the crowning treason of bringing in a foreign potentate—all this laid up for them a heavy score to be paid off when the day of reckoning came. That day moved inevitably onward, a veritable *dies irae*. Juarez, the little Indian, personification of native Mexico, with his little cabinet of the *inmaculados* (stainless), and his ragged regiments of volunteers, was the instrument in the hands of long-delayed but inevitable Justice.

While the long struggle was under way, the popular party saw as clearly as did their opponents, that the education of the people was the one step which would guarantee the triumph of genuine democracy. Their leaders are on record again and again as laying down this principle; and in the brief intervals

when they had control, measures were repeatedly taken in the interest of education. But those intervals of power were infrequent and brief. In two outline histories of education during the nineteenth century, one covering the State of Jalisco and the other that of Nuevo Leon, time and again the authors, after detailing plans that had been laid out, laws that had been passed, the personnel even of the teaching force that had been nominated, mournfully remark that all these provisions became ineffective at a certain date because of changes in the political situation. The hardships endured by many men, in all sections of the Republic, who felt themselves called to this work of educating the people, and who persisted in their attempt to be obedient to this high calling, no matter what happened in politics and public affairs, make a chapter of heroism that the future historian of Mexico will dwell upon with just pride.

Another factor, in addition to the perennial political disturbances, affected profoundly the development of public education. This was the poverty of the public treasury. The constant shifting of the political center of gravity caused frequent armed conflicts. These brought their inevitable accompaniments of ineffective policing, of neglected agriculture and diminished commerce, and of the absorption of all available men into the armies, and of all available funds into the war treasury. "Military necessity" was often a pretext for robbery, and first one party and then the other harried the country, carrying off grain and livestock, robbing convoys of bullion, frightening capital into hiding, and in numerous other ways reducing a country naturally rich in resources to a state of abject penury. This condition was the rule rather than the exception during the entire sixty years from 1820 to 1880. The shifts to which the military and political leaders were driven to finance their movements, especially those of the popular or liberal party, who, to begin with, represented the side of poverty as against wealth, are only equalled by the misery in which these continuous revolutions left the people at large. Cities, *haciendas*, and churches, were stripped of every form of visible wealth. Silver ornaments were melted down and coined into money, jewelry and precious stones

were sold, lead was molded into bullets, steel was beaten into weapons, bells became cannon, grain was commandeered for the commissary. The whole land was peeled again and again.

Naturally, when the national treasury itself was empty the separate states were still worse off. The state organizations were the plaything of national politics. The Federalists set them up in due form and order; the Centralists in their turn upset and even abolished them, or, at least, subordinated them completely to the central Government. Since, following still the example of the United States, the matter of education had been left wholly to the initiative of the several states, this uncertainty, this precariousness of tenure, on the part of the state governments, affected most disastrously the interests of education. One might expect, however, that during the long permanence in power of the Centralist party, some measures, by way of pretext, at least, for the education of the people would have been devised by the general Government. The only instance would seem to be the law of 1842, referred to below. For the leaders of the Centralist party had been trained in the school of Spanish politics. They apparently were not sure that the common people needed education. Subconsciously they felt also no doubt, as already suggested, that the education of the masses would be disastrous to their favorite policies and would jeopardize their tenure of power.

As for the states, another element of uncertainty was introduced into educational endeavor, during the intervals when the states were permitted to exercise a reasonable measure of autonomy, and that was the division of responsibility for the schools between the state governments and the municipalities. Partly to follow still the theory of local self-government, but even more because the poverty of their treasuries made them helpless, the state authorities from time to time tried the experiment of leaving education wholly to the municipal governments. These *municipios* are in conception somewhat like the early New England "towns." They comprise rural districts along with the central settlement. Naturally, nothing was gained by this device. If the state was poor, the municipalities were poorer. They had only the scantiest funds for an undertaking that seemed to them colossal. More-



over, the schools thus handled were without the supervision of experts from the central office of the state, and only in the capitals and other larger cities were men to be found capable of taking the management of such work. In spite of excellent theories, therefore, and in the face of a constantly growing and urgent popular demand—and this was something really new, a by-product of the long-drawn struggle for freedom—education languished.\*

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\*A definite instance of this sort occurred in Coahuila and Texas when, in 1833, the legislative body of that dual state provided that the various municipalities were to sell the public property within their limits and use the funds for the establishment of primary schools. Moreover, all vacant property was to revert to the state and be used for a similar purpose. Yet no substantial improvement followed this legislation. Cf. Cox, *op. cit.* 39, 40.

Señor Chávez reports that under the Díaz government the Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes often received requests for aid from "scantily-settled communities where the scholastic population was so sparse as to make the maintenance of a school most difficult." These requests for the foundation of schools by the general Government sometimes came from communities outside the federal district and were accompanied by offers of small buildings and other properties for school purposes. This desire to co-operate, so far as its scanty resources permitted, was also manifested by the Mexican authorities of San Antonio in the period mentioned above.—I. J. C.

## VI — DEVELOPMENTS, 1821-1867

### *Summary*

The first of these dates, 1821, marks the achievement of independence, the second the triumph of republicanism. Since the second, 1867, education in Mexico has assumed its modern form, as *obligatoria, gratuita, y laica*—compulsory, free, and secular.

A long series of revolutions began in 1829. Early legislation was obliterated by them. Use has been made of a history of education in Jalisco, and of a similar history for Nuevo Leon. One development of the early movements was a reawakening on the part of Church leaders. Education was still in their hands during the early decades. Nuevo Leon issued its constitution in 1825, providing for public education as a duty of the state. The legislature formulated a law which was passed February, 1826. This seems to have been one of the first instances of providing for compulsory education. Insufficient fiscal provisions marked the laws of the first decade. Jalisco, also, passed good laws. About this time the Lancasterian system was introduced. It suited a situation where funds and teachers were scarce. The system was adopted by the Federal Government, and gradually spread through all the states. In those same years came the development of the *Institutos*. These were remnants usually of the faculties of letters and philosophy of the old Church universities. Now they became state schools. They were liberal and furnished centers for men of liberal ideas and propensities. French thought had begun to affect the life of Mexico. Through its acceptance in the *institutos* it reached directly the educated men, and through them the educational system. Controversies with Rome over patronage started a movement for separation between Church and State. Radical proposals were made as early as 1833. The Church resisted, and called in the army. *Fueros* were attacked. The next twenty years (1833-1853) the Government was most of the time Centralist. Only one educational move was made at headquarters, and this, an executive order of Santa Anna in 1842, proved abortive. Lopez Cotilla was an apostle of education in Jalisco. Santa Anna's dictatorship in '53-'54 brought on revolution. The Republicans undertook radical reforms and adopted the constitution of 1857. Resistance by the clericals brought on the Three Years' War and the *Leyes de Reforma*. The final breach between the Church party and the people came when the clericals supported the French Intervention. The reform laws had a wide-reaching effect. The confiscation of Church property was justified by those responsible, because of the interference of the clericals, and by reason of the needs of the liberal government. All this resulted in a radical change of educational standards. The Church was no longer looked to for public education. The State accepted this task as a duty and a responsibility.

THE above dates are chosen because the first marks the achievement of political freedom from Spain, and the second the final vindication of the Republic, upon the elimination of Maximilian and the French troops. The epoch is a well-marked period. During those four and a half decades the republican ideal gradually unfolded itself. The educational standard was evolved along with the rest. By the time Juarez was at last firmly seated as constitutional President (1868), he and his associates had begun to see clearly—what had hitherto appeared to them but fitfully and dimly—that, as it came to be expressed, education was the duty of the state (including the municipality) and should be *obligatoria, gratuita, y laica*—compulsory, free, and secular. In other words, it was recognized that the community was under obligation to supply tax-supported schools, and the parents under obligation to send their children to them; and that the theory long accepted that the Church could be depended on to supply public education, or, failing to do so, that the instruction given by the state could and should be distinctively religious, was untenable. Since we, at the very beginning of our national life, grappled with the problem of separating Church and State, confusion over the matter of religion in the public schools has in our country been a secondary matter. But in Mexico, the Church had had for hundreds of years entire control of education, even of that supported by taxation (which was not a great matter, to be sure). It was most natural, therefore, that it should take time for the people to come to see clearly the distinction between a church school and a public school. As a matter of fact, during those earlier years of the Republic, when the conservative and centralist influences were most of the time in control of the Government, clerics continued to be the leaders in educational work. The little that was done in the direction of building up a public school system followed the time-honored custom of identifying the schools with the monasteries and convents, and relying almost wholly on the religious orders and secular clergy for teachers.

The fleeting “empire” of Iturbide produced, so far as the writer has been able to ascertain, no educational movement. But when following it the republicans had their turn, they



embodied their noble and progressive aspirations in the Federal Constitution of 1824, in the rapidly succeeding state constitutions which were based upon it, and in the statutes and executive orders which everywhere came in a shower to complete and make effective this organic legislation. Education was given the place of honor. Some state constitutions even went into particulars as to both principles and plans. Most of them, however, stopped with laying down principles, leaving details to be worked out in legislative statutes.

The state congresses and executives did not delay to comply with this obligation. Everywhere educational programs were framed, systems of schools were laid out, courses of study were formulated. One reads today this elaborate legislation of nearly a hundred years ago with mingled feelings. It is admirable. It is surprising. There were educational seers in those days, men of prophetic vision. They had gathered suggestions and inspiration from all quarters. They were absolutely open-minded. Their limitations were entirely those of their time and conditions. In the law promulgated by the State of Nuevo Leon, for example, the principle of compulsory attendance at school is distinctly laid down; and 1826 is a very early date in the history of this phase of public education.

But for all that, the legislation did not "march." In 1829 began the long series of revolutions. The progressive and patriotic party was forced to yield control of the central government, and the conservatives, once in power, lost no time in bringing also the several states into alignment. All these elaborate and promising provisions for the education of the people went then to the scrap-pile, along with most other elements of the liberal program. Those early educational laws have now about them an atmosphere of pathos. It seems too bad that what promised so well should have come to naught.

Reference has been made to the legislation in the State of Nuevo Leon. I have had, also, before me a history of primary education in Jalisco. The story there is almost identical. No doubt, the archives of many other states, if searched, would disclose substantially the same history. Zacatecas, for example,

has long been known as a leader in educational matters, as have been, also, Veracruz, Coahuila, and others.\*

Following the effervescence of laws, projects (*proyectos*), and programs during the quadrennium 1824-28, came a period of quiescence. There were many resolute spirits, however, who had consecrated themselves to the work of teaching, and who were not greatly concerned with politics. These kept on with their propaganda, and the subject was not allowed to lapse. Some of the Church leaders, also, unwilling to forego the long ascendancy which they had enjoyed in teaching, bestirred themselves anew. For several years all legislation or official action of any kind that was taken with reference to education reverted to the colonial type in placing the work of teaching in their hands. One interesting and unique incident was a provision in some of the states for Sunday schools. These schools, to be held on Sundays and other feast days, were for the training of adults, as well as children, but were limited specifically to the teaching of reading and writing. Prizes were offered to the teachers who could show a certain number of "graduates" in these branches. This was one effort to make up for the neglect of educational affairs shown by the Church leaders during the Spanish régime. So rare was the ability to read and write at the time of the revolution that when the government of Iturbide sought men for appointment as the chief officers of municipalities, it is related on good authority that there were towns of ten and twelve thousand inhabitants without a single man able to write.

Before dismissing from our consideration the educational ideals with which the Mexican Republic began its history—

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\*The decree of the constitutional congress of the state of Coahuila and Texas, May 13, 1829, provided for the establishment of schools on the Lancasterian plan, in the capital of each of the three departments into which the state was divided. These schools, restricted to 150 pupils each, were not free to all, but the separate municipal councils could maintain a limited number of pupils in each school at public expense, and loan money to the general school fund, in special emergencies. A comprehensive plan to raise money for the school fund was adopted and measures taken to provide adequate salaries for the teachers. Instruction was to be given in reading, writing, arithmetic, the dogma of the Catholic religion, and all of Ackerman's "Catechisms of Arts and Sciences." In the following year the plan was modified so as to provide for primary schools, the stipendium for teachers was considerably reduced, and a system of "rewards of virtue and application" introduced. Despite the good intentions back of these decrees, the absolute lack of funds prevented their realization. Cf. Cox, *op. cit.* 36-39.—I. J. C.

those plans which for so long went without realization—in order that we may take up the further course of the history of education there, it will be worth while, perhaps, to review briefly the specific provisions then made. They have been indicated hitherto in only a desultory way. Details are given of the legislative provisions and executive orders in Nuevo Leon and Jalisco only. Their similarity will at once be noted, and it may be inferred that they constitute a fair type of what took place generally throughout the Republic.

From the concise and admirable *Historical Review of Public Education in Nuevo Leon* (*Reseña Histórica de la Instrucción Pública en Nuevo Leon*), written twenty years ago by an able and honored representative of the teaching profession (*profesorado*) of Mexico, Professor Miguel F. Martinez, are taken the following particulars. The Federal Constitution having been proclaimed October 4, 1824, the people of Nuevo Leon made haste to issue their state constitution, which was adopted March 5, 1825. Article 230, section 10, of this instrument declared that it was obligatory upon city governments to “promote the proper education of the young, to establish endowed schools of primary grade, to see to the due conservation and right government of those already in existence, respecting always the rights of individuals or corporations.” (Endowment here could scarcely have meant invested funds.) Section 12, of the same Article, laid upon the members of these same municipal governing bodies the duty of “visiting the schools weekly, in order to inform themselves of their condition and progress, such special attention being warranted by their importance.”

In Article 257 the same constitution even went into details as to the course of study for primary schools. It ordered that in all villages of the state primary schools should be established in which should “be taught reading, writing, the principles of numbers, the catechism of Christian doctrine, and a summary explanation of the duties of citizenship.”

Still another Article, 259, ordered the state legislature to formulate “a general governing plan for public instruction” to obtain throughout the state, based upon “a simple and practicable method, properly adjusted to existing conditions.”



One year after the adoption of the Constitution, February, 1826, the legislature issued as Provisional Act No. 73 the plan provided for. It is divided into three parts: 1. General Provisions; 2. Primary Instruction; 3. Secondary Instruction. Among the General Regulations is found one already referred to, which affirms (Art. 4): "Parents who through poverty can not teach or have taught their children and servants at home their Christian and civic duties, and to read and to write, shall be required to send them to the public schools, such exemption being made as the proper authority may permit in case they are needed on farm or ranch or other productive work." Mr. Martinez is disposed to claim on this basis, and with apparent justice, that compulsory education in Nuevo Leon dates from the year 1826. He admits that the law failed to provide for the enforcement of this obligation, and that the law itself was in force as such but a few years.\* It stands still, however, as a tribute to the ideals of the men of that early day.

Our author gives at some length the provisions for primary schools. The course of studies was so elaborate and so modern, that compared with that agreed upon at the First National Congress on Education held in 1889, a curriculum that was practically universal in the Republic at the time Mr. Martinez wrote (1894), only five items were lacking, viz.: "lessons of things, metric system, bookkeeping, political economy, and choral singing." But there were three of genuine value in the early course that were wanting in that of 1889, namely horticulture, agriculture, and rifle-firing. Special emphasis was given to manual training and domestic arts, especially in the course for girls. In 1829 this Provisional Statute No. 73 was given the full force of law. Special provisions applying to the districts of the State had already been passed, requiring the municipalities to see that schools were provided even in the smallest settlements (*rancherías*)—Mexico has no strictly rural population—and demanding again that the municipal authorities see to it that parents whose children roamed the streets

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\*For a similar condition in the neighboring state of Coahuila and Texas, cf. Cox, *op. cit.* 36-40. In this state the authorities continued to express their sentiments on the subject of education as late as 1834. In his message of that year the governor wished to arouse the parents of the state to the necessity of educating their children, "in order to banish the chaos of ignorance in which the greater part of the communities lie." Coahuila and Texas resisted the centralizing policy of Santa Anna long after other regions had submitted.—I. J. C.

should be *compelled* to send them to school or to put them to work.

Unfortunately the force of the legislation spent itself in theoretical plans. No definite provision was made for financing the system. It seems all the way to have been expected that the municipal governments would assume the financial burden. But they were poor, and their taxing authority limited. In the absence of specific orders the thing went by default. It was this failure more than anything else which made the disappearance of the whole enterprise follow so easily upon a shift in the political situation. Had fiscal provisions been made, and a definite body and continuity been thus communicated to the educational movement, its momentum would have carried it forward, and the men who succeeded to power would have thought twice before laying violent hands upon it. Left unsupported, it fell by its own weight, or speaking more exactly, it never had any but a theoretical and paper existence.

Sixteen years after the issue of the *Review* prepared by Professor Martinez came the centenary of national independence, celebrated in 1910. In commemoration of the event, Professor Manuel R. Alatorre, at the time School Inspector for the State, prepared that year a history of primary education in Jalisco, from 1810 to 1910. This excellent monograph compared with that of Mr. Martinez exhibits strikingly the similarity of conditions throughout the Republic. As in Nuevo Leon, there was in Jalisco the beginning out of nothing under the liberal régime 1824-28, followed by the same sudden lapse at the end of that period, due to political changes and inadequate financing, the same indomitable persistence by devoted teachers, the same semi-revival through a renewed coalition with the Church leaders, the same final eclipse of the liberal educational plans under the selfish and illiberal administration of Santa Anna. As an older and better organized "Intendencia," Jalisco had had in colonial days an educational development somewhat in advance of those of the border State of Nuevo Leon. Yet after the storm of the revolution there was little left on which to build. The City of Guadalajara, as early as 1821, undertook to open a primary school supported by city funds. Immediately after the consummation of national

independence, Jalisco became a sovereign state, having a population of half a million inhabitants. Its constitution, adopted in November, 1824, ordered that primary schools should be established in every village of the state, and that the legislature should provide a state-wide educational law.

At the request of the legislature, the first Governor, Don Prisciliano Sanchez, had a law drafted, and on March 26, 1826, the bill was passed by that body. It provided that official education should be "public, free, and uniform," allowing private schools to be freely conducted, with only such inspection as would safeguard against infraction of the laws. Public instruction was to be divided into four classes—one class for the villages, one for the larger towns, one for the department capitals, and one for the state capital. The law appears to be rather a jumble as to requirements, as these classes, though grading upward by reason of the additions to the course of study, were also to be distinguished by the amount of the salaries paid to teachers. It exhibits a striking instance of the effect of old and powerful social inheritances, in that different classes of society had different classes of schools. The conception that some elements of the population were better and deserved more of the Government than others died hard.

This Jalisco plan also placed the whole financial burden of the schools on the municipalities. So there, as in Nuevo Leon and elsewhere, two giant difficulties stood in the way—the lack of funds, and the lack of teachers. Nevertheless, mutual sacrifices made by municipal governments, and by such teachers as could be had, resulted in the opening of numerous primary schools throughout the state. The teachers were poorly paid, and they were inefficient, but a beginning was made.

Schools could not, of course, be conducted without teachers and without funds to support them. As one examines the elaborate provisions for courses of study, discipline, organization, etc., which characterize this early legislation, and recalls how it all fell to the ground for want of these prime necessities, he gets the impression that it was the work of theorists. These men were so busy with their dream of a perfect system of schools



that they did not stop to make the practical provisions necessary for carrying on any kind of a school.

At this juncture, when the hopelessness of the situation had been demonstrated by a few years of actual test, a remedy was offered which the Mexicans in their innocence seized upon with high hope. This was the Lancasterian system of schools.

Among liberal and progressive men in Great Britain much good will had been aroused by the political liberation of Spanish America. England's ancient rivalry with Spain, and in particular the antagonism felt by many of her citizens toward the reactionary policies of the Catholic monarchy, including the long nightmare of the Inquisition, made the story of this uprising of a whole continent to assert its independence, and to align itself with democracy and progress, a most fascinating one. English investors hastened to aid in the material development of these newly opened fields, and at the same time English philanthropists and teachers concerned themselves with the moral and social development of the Latin-American peoples. In the history of almost every republic of South America is enshrined the story of some man from Great Britain who dedicated his life and his fortune to the cause of education. This was rarer a hundred years ago than it is now.

Even in England, popular education was at that time in its experimental stage. When, therefore, Joseph Lancaster produced his scheme for making students teach one another, the extraordinary plan soon had a great vogue. Its defects do not need now to be pointed out. It was too much like the attempt of a man to lift himself by his own bootstraps ever to attain any solid success. Yet it did furnish rudimentary instruction of a sort, with an economy that was amazing. And the economy was even more marked in the matter of supplying teachers than in the actual money cost.

This precisely met the situation in Mexico. Poor as were the states and the municipalities throughout the young Republic, it was, nevertheless, easier to raise money than to supply teachers for the needed schools. Indeed, the chief difficulty was (and is to this day) the securing of teachers for whose services the people were willing to pay. It is said on excellent authority that today in the most scantily settled communities

of Mexico, where the scholastic population is so sparse as to make the sustaining of a school most difficult, it is easy to get the citizens to add to the stipend afforded by taxes if only they are assured of a competent teacher. The inefficiency of the teachers was, perhaps, the heaviest handicap upon the public education during these experimental years under the first constitution.

The plan of Lancaster was, as will be recalled, to have the older pupils act as monitors and teachers of the younger. In this way one teacher could handle a very large number of students. This mode of instruction was spoken of as "mutual." Only reading, writing, and the rudiments of arithmetic were attempted. These schools had a rapid development in England itself during the opening years of the nineteenth century. Buildings and funds were provided by philanthropic men, and a large number of very poor children were thus taught. Later Lancaster, who had proved to be as impracticable in the organization and management of an effective system as he had been happy in the development of a fruitful idea, emigrated to America, spent some time in South America, and succeeded in giving wide advertisement to his idea.

The Lancasterian system was introduced into Mexico in 1822.\* It was at once seized upon as the solution of a situation which offered a few teachers of real ability and a huge mass of pupils eager to be taught. For the whole period under review (1821-1867) it represented the educational activities of most of the states. It had not only the merit indicated, of enabling one teacher to handle—after a fashion—a large number of pupils, but the added one of developing initiative and an organic consciousness among the pupils themselves. In Guadalajara was founded in the year 1828 an official Lancasterian State Normal School, under the direction of Professor Richard Jones, described as a relative of Joseph Lancaster. Special provision was made to secure the attendance of the

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\*The *Sociedad Lancasteriana* was founded in Mexico City in the year 1822 as a result of the strong impression produced by articles published in the newspaper *El Sol* for the diffusion of the system of Lancaster. The first schools were immediately started at Mexico City, and an effort was made to develop one of the schools as a Normal for the training of teachers for all the country.—E. A. C. (See the *History of Mexican Education from the Beginnings till 1900*, by Ezequiel A. Chávez, in Vol. II of *Mexico: Its Social Evolution*.)

rural teachers, their expense of travel and board being paid out of public funds. The school had a brief history only, and disappeared during the political convulsions of the early thirties.

Another phase of the educational history of the period under review deserves separate mention. It was contemporary with, though perhaps a little slower and later than the Lancasterian movement, and had to do with higher education as that with lower. This was the gradual emergence of the central state schools called "Institutos."

The Jesuits, as we have seen, had looked upon the higher education as their special province. The nucleus of a university according to Jesuit practice is always a theological seminary. The course of development then is to add, as time goes by and means are afforded, schools of jurisprudence, of medicine, and finally of philosophy. This latter meant, of course, the scholastic philosophy; and such a school was still a good distance removed from a college of liberal arts. It was, however, the only thing even remotely resembling it in the colonial days of Mexico.

In 1767 the Jesuits were expelled from Mexico, as well as from all other parts of the Spanish kingdom, by an order of King Charles III. Their extensive libraries, school buildings, mission stations, and other properties were confiscated. The society had been popular in Mexico, and their sudden exile outraged and astounded the people. The institutions for higher learning which they had established in practically every leading city of the country, were taken over by the Crown. The theological work was at once placed in the hands of the secular Clergy of the Church, but the schools of jurisprudence, medicine, and philosophy passed under state control. In many of the states of Mexico today the "Instituto" will be found housed in some old building near or on an open square called "Plaza de la Compañía," that is, of the Company of Jesus. These institutions had then varying fortunes, according to the stability of the funds upon which they depended, the zeal of local government officials, the ability of the men directing the schools, and so on. The professional schools fared best, as they dealt in living needs and ministered to present demands.



The faculties of philosophy, of the "college proper," as the phrase sometimes goes in our own day and land, tended strongly to dry up. Nobody was greatly interested in scholastic philosophy.

Yet these higher schools furnished a nucleus and a suggestion. Though of little importance during the later colonial period, very early in the course of the independent history of the states they began to be revived and reformed into "Institutos." Far-seeing leaders perceived in them the promise of valuable service. With liberty from the Inquisition, and from the intervention of ecclesiastics in governmental affairs, books began to pour into the country. The young men were reading. They were demanding to know. They were calling for guidance. Why should not the states themselves provide it in these same "Institutos"?

The breach that fifty years before had been opened between them and the theological seminaries was now widened. The country was still orthodox. Even the republican constitution had sought to perpetuate a state church. But the books which were now read by the teachers and pupils of these institutes were precisely those that orthodoxy could not tolerate. They were caustic, dissolvent, irreverent, even atheistical essays of the French philosophers, who had reacted against Ultramontanism, in Church and State.

It would scarcely be possible to overestimate the influence of this irruption of French ideas among the youth of Mexico, or of the "Institutos" as affording centers for the men who entertained them and asylums for the ideas themselves. These men were comparatively few in number. Most of them were identified with the recently introduced Masonic lodges, and this fact, along with the objectionable literature which they read and the revolutionary political ideas which they were suspected of entertaining, made it hard for them to avoid open conflict with the jealous and watchful hierarchy of the Church.

A thorny and contradictory public question made the situation all the more acute. This was the matter of ecclesiastical patronage. Since the patronage of Mexico had belonged to the Spanish Crown, and since the Pope had anathematized the revolutionary movement in Mexico, a situation had arisen

which nobody could disentangle. Mexico was still loyal to the Church. The clergy maintained under the Republic their special exemptions (*fueros*), and all other religions were outlawed. The vast properties held under mortmain were as yet undisturbed. But neither the King of Spain nor the Pope would recognize Mexican independence. The Pope yielded first, because the Mexican Government was about to lay hands on the patronage of the Mexican Church. All this gave the revolutionary spirits an excellent pretext for launching a radical program. "Let us have separation between Church and State," they said; "let us abolish these special courts of the clergy, and make them amenable to law; and let us disentail these huge holdings of land, and see that they are distributed and made productive." Such were the proposals, held, if not clearly enunciated, by a group of men who rallied as early as 1833 about Valentín Gomez Farías, then Vice-President, a man destined to become an outstanding figure in the later stirring scenes of his country's history. It was in those same years that the young Indian, Benito Juárez, was breaking the intellectual shackles of the Jesuit seminary in Oaxaca, and was assisting in the revival of the *Instituto* there, an enterprise which later, as governor and president, he ever continued to cherish.

Against this menace the Church leaders promptly appealed to the Army. Its officers enjoyed *fueros* also, and its spirit was instinctively conservative. Besides, the huge mass of the people could understand nothing of these new and shocking ideas. They got their instruction and their mental guidance almost wholly from the priests, who began freely to use pulpit, confessional, and social circle to discredit and outlaw this republicanism which was bruited about. The liberals were overwhelmed. Santa Anna came upon the scene at this juncture as champion of both Church and Army. Gomez Farías was banished; despite the fact that a moderate party had been formed to mediate between the extremists of both wings, and had received his support, along with that of other able liberals.

In this period 1835 to 1855, the national Government was, most of the time, Centralist. Until the year 1842 the matter of

schools continued to be left to the states—called in those days *Departamentos*—which seem usually to have left it to the municipalities. In some of the capitals there was vigorous activity, under the lead, as a rule, of some one man, who as governor, state superintendent, inspector, or private citizen, devoted himself unselfishly to the cause. In Guadalajara statistics show that under the guidance of a board of education organized as early as 1837, of which Mr. Lopez Cotilla was the dominating spirit, there was maintained a system of primary schools. In 1839 there were in the city and its suburbs twenty-two such schools, twelve in the city proper. There was an attendance of 2,469 pupils, and the year's outlay was \$10,448.

In the year 1842 the Centralist government, at the time directed by Santa Anna, undertook at last to further primary education. An elaborate decree was issued, providing for a central Lancasterian board in Mexico City, which should have the exclusive right to prepare and license teachers, and for departmental boards subordinate to it. Governors of the Departments were required to establish at least one school for boys and one for girls for every ten thousand inhabitants, and were authorized to levy a special tax of one real (12½ cents) on each head of a family. One per cent of this was to go to the central board. Attendance was to be obligatory, and the course of studies was prescribed. It embraced reading, writing, the four primary rules of arithmetic, and Christian doctrine. The whole system was placed under the patronage of the Virgin of Guadalupe.

This proved to be another paper public school system. The upheaval consequent upon the war with the United States invalidated the little that had been done in the interval to set the system in operation. Professor Martinez says very bluntly that it was a system based so completely upon the conceptions and ideals of colonial days that it failed to appeal to the educational leaders throughout the country. What with being rigidly centralized and also subordinated to the dictates of the clergy, it lacked the atmosphere of freedom and of spontaneity which alone could win the co-operation of the men who were devoting their lives to the cause of education.



It had one noteworthy effect, which was to strengthen the position of the Lancasterian boards. These, both the national board and those of the Departments, had become more or less autonomous corporations, and after the usual manner of corporations they had begun industriously to extend their power. This temporary legal recognition gave them an advantage, and they became so strong in some cities as later to dispute with regular state boards over questions of authority and administration. The Lancasterian standards were thus perpetuated to the close of the period which we have now under review.

The American War resulted disastrously for the Centralist party. At the beginning of the sixth decade, the Federalists, after a long minority, again for a brief period secured control of the Government. The sovereign states were re-established, and the cause of education received instant attention. In Jalisco, Lopez Cotilla, the apostle of public education, had continued during all the intervening years to keep alive the work of the schools. Unconcerned apparently as to whether the government were conservative or liberal, whether he worked under a Department or a Sovereign State, whether the system was municipal or general, Lancasterian or other, he fought bravely on, devoting his life and his fortune to the cause of educating the youth of his country. The measure of his success during the trying decade, 1840-1850, is itself a criterion of the man's devotion and aptitudes. When in 1855 he was forced by ill health at last to give up his leadership—he was at that time Inspector General of Jalisco, once more a *Departamento*—he was mourned and eulogized by Government, teachers and the public.\*

The shameless dictatorship of Santa Anna, established in 1853, and his utter incapacity for civil administration, brought the conservative party once more into disrepute, and augmented the number and strength of the progressives. By 1855 Santa Anna was banished, and a sturdy liberal soldier, Juan Alvarez, was in the presidential chair. The constitution of 1824, though it had been re-adopted once or twice at intervals when the

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\*Among other apostles of public education in Mexico during this period we may mention the name of Vidal Alcocer. His humble and self-sacrificing, but wonderful work was carried on in the City of Mexico. Cf. Chávez, *History of Mexican Education*, loc. cit.—E. A. C.

liberals were in power, did not seem now to meet the needs of the situation. A constitutional convention was, therefore, ordered, and work begun on a new constitution. The radical reforms which had been hinted at in 1833 were now to become a reality. There was to be separation between Church and State. There was to be equality before the law. *Fueros*, both military and ecclesiastical, were doomed. There was to be a new assertion of the Rights of Man. The venerable Gomez Farías lived to see the fruition of his hopes. One of the finest episodes in Mexican history is the scene when, supported on either side by a son, he tottered forward to affix his signature as a member of Congress to that instrument, one which Mexicans still look upon as the charter of their freedom. The new constitution was proclaimed February 5, 1857.

The clerical party, however, interposed a tremendous resistance. *Fueros* and political prestige could not be given up without a struggle. The three years' war that ensued (1858-1861) was the bitterest in Mexico's history. The conservatives insisted on projecting into the foreground the religious question—on making it a war for and against religion. The storm proved too much for Comonfort, who had meantime been elected President. He gave up and left the country, and Benito Juarez, who was at the time President of the Supreme Court, succeeded to his position. This remarkable man had sprung from a very humble Zapotec Indian family in the State of Oaxaca. Following a sister to the capital city of the same name, where she had work as a domestic servant, he obtained a similar position, learning to speak Spanish after he was fourteen years of age. He worked his way into the theological seminary, passed then to the Institute, studied law, taught, became director of the Institute, Congressman, governor of his state, and later, as we have seen, President of the Federal Supreme Court (then an elective position).

The Conservatives, with the help of the army, took possession of the Capital and of the central part of the Republic, and Juarez was obliged, after a long and circuitous trip, full of personal dangers, to set up his government in Vera Cruz. It was from that city that he guided the destinies of the progressive party during the bloody and fractricidal Three Years'

War, and there, at the height of that struggle, convinced at last that such a step was inevitable, he proclaimed the Reform Laws (*Leyes de Reforma*). This was in 1859. Fifteen years later, during the presidency of Lerdo de Tejada, those laws, placed thus irregularly in operation by executive order, were deliberately re-enacted and strengthened, by vote of the Federal Congress. Every year since, experience has served to confirm the Mexican people in the conviction that these laws are essential to their national well-being. This conviction is now well nigh universal among them, though the resistance of the Church officials has never ceased.

Perhaps it will not be superfluous here to give the summary as compiled by Juarez and his ministers themselves, of what it was proposed by these laws to accomplish. They announced as their purpose:

1. To adopt as a general and invariable principle absolute separation between state affairs and ecclesiastical affairs.

2. To suppress all religious orders for men, without exception, secularizing the priests who belonged to them.

3. To extinguish all religious brotherhoods of every class.

4. To close the novitiates of convents for women, allowing no more to enter, but permitting those under vows to continue to enjoy the income from their endowments or personal gifts, with a proper allowance for the support of worship.

5. To declare to be the property of the nation all of the goods now administered by the clergy, regular or secular, under any title whatever, as well as that held by convents of nuns in excess of specific endowment gifts, and to alienate the titles to said property, accepting in part payment for them certain national securities.

6. To declare that such remuneration as believers may give to their priests for administering the sacraments and for other ecclesiastical services—which if properly handled and distributed will suffice for the sustenance of public worship and of those who minister therein—shall be a matter of voluntary agreement between the parties interested, the civil authorities having nothing whatever to do with it.

7. Moreover, in addition to these measures, which the Government believes are the only ones which will result in the proper submission of the clergy to the authorities of the state in all civil matters, while they remain free to devote themselves, as they should, to the exercise of a spiritual ministry, it believes further that it is indispensable that it should safeguard in the republic complete religious liberty, and this it will do, both as essential to its own well being and as demanded by modern civilization.\*

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\*Justo Sierra, *Juarez, su Obra y su Tiempo*, p. 153.



Juarez was a strongly religious man. He seems to have been little affected by the materialistic philosophy of his time. As Governor of the State of Oaxaca he had enforced the collection, under the existing laws, of tithes for the parish priests. It was, no doubt, a source of real pain to him to be placed thus in the attitude of antagonizing the Church, which, as his opponents insisted, was the same thing as antagonizing religion. It is essential in the study of this episode to take note of a distinction which was perfectly clear to the mind of Juarez and his associates. Their struggle was against the higher clergy, the bishops, archbishops, and others, and not against the humble parish priests. The latter had furnished leaders and goodwill in all the revolutionary efforts, and their sympathies were sure to be with the common people to whom they ministered. But the hierarchy as a group, the successors of the men who in colonial days had been counselors of the kings, viceroys, visitors, members of the *audiencia*, of the India Council, the Inquisition, and the like, held tenaciously to the idea that they ought to share in the government.

An important element in the gradual clearing up of the ideas of Juarez on this whole matter was his residence as an exile for about two years in New Orleans. With him were Ocampo, Mata, Arriaga, and others. They worked for their living as day-laborers, Juarez as a cigar-maker. This was in 1853 and 1854, during the last dictatorship of Santa Anna. Their observation of liberty in operation, and the consequent prosperity and strength, made a profound impression upon them. Thenceforward, Juarez never doubted that one step at least was fundamental for the future of his country, and that was the establishment of religious liberty.

Miguel Lerdo de Tejada was the intellectual leader of the group of reformers who conceived, formulated, and popularized the principle of complete separation between Church and State. One thoughtful Mexican historian declares that the *Leyes de Reforma* were really more fundamental in the evolution of Mexico's freedom than even the Constitution of '57 itself. This constitution had, however, opened the way, since it omitted (for the first time) the article declaring the Roman Catholic religion to be the official and only faith of the country.

Separation between the Church and State is now so nearly an axiom in democratic governments that it will be no surprise to most students to find the Mexican people coming thus to accept it. The confiscation of Church property which accompanied this acceptance was less evidently justifiable. The leaders of the patriotic party in 1859 offered several grounds for this step. In the first place, they said, "these great properties—the real estate especially—were largely acquired by taxation. They are fundamentally national, because the nation authorized the contributions which created them. But they have been made unproductive by being withdrawn from settlement, taxation, and proper development, and their products devoted to the support of parasitic groups of men and women. Moreover, the Church leaders who persist in opposing the entire program of republican development, use this wealth to wage their campaign of opposition. They are able in war to employ large bodies of soldiers. Yet they have ever been unwilling, even in time of foreign war, to contribute to the expenses of the Government. Even now they are about to defeat the establishment of a genuinely modern, progressive constitution. They ought to be deprived of the means of doing this kind of mischief. The liberal Government, on the other hand, needs the resources which would thus be obtained. It is the champion of the poor people, and is itself, after prolonged fighting, distressingly poor."

Such were the arguments. Even before the Federal law was proclaimed from Vera Cruz, these principles had been put into operation in several states where constitutionalist governors had triumphed. Ortega, Vidaurri, Ogazón, and others were already testing them. Lerdo de Tejada said to Juarez about this time: "If you do not put into operation this reform, it will go into operation of itself." It had become a sort of self-evident matter with the leaders of the patriot party. But with the meager facilities then existing for reaching and teaching the people, and with the clericals more intent than ever upon impressing upon their followers that the liberal program was an attack on religion, the constitutionalist cause was not yet universally popular. It was at last slowly gaining the ascendancy in arms, but might have needed still a long time

before winning the goodwill of the people at large, had not the conservatives made a final and fatal blunder. This was the bringing in of foreign intervention, resulting in the tragic "empire" of Maximilian. With this they placed a weapon in the hands of the liberals which has enabled the latter to dominate public sentiment to this day. If the Mexican is incurably religious, he is equally inflexible in his nationalism. Mexico for the Mexicans is his creed. To this he adheres to the last man. He will brook no outside interference. Louis Napoleon got his lesson. American statesmen of our day may well profit by it.

It has seemed worth while to trace thus particularly the history of the triumph of liberal ideas, because of the direct bearing which the political development had on education in Mexico. For three hundred and fifty years that country had been committed to one educational ideal, viz.: the entrusting of the whole cause to the Church. Now she entered upon a new path. Henceforth the way was open for education by the State, and Church schools were to cease to have any public or official status.\*

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\*Since writing the above paragraph the writer has come upon a terse and comprehensive statement of this transition, by Dr. Edgar Ewing Brandon, of Miami University. In his report on Latin-American universities, issued as a bulletin (1912, No. 30) of the U. S. Bureau of Education, he says (p. 132, 133):

"Up to the time of their independence, Latin-American countries relied entirely on the Church for the establishment and maintenance of schools. The local priest had oversight of the primary school, if there was one. Religious orders maintained institutions of secondary grade, and the colonial universities all owed their foundation to the Church. In the struggle for independence the clergy very generally favored the colonies, for it was not Spain, the Catholic, against which they first rebelled, but against Spain, the subject of Napoleon, the man who had despoiled the Church and virtually imprisoned the Pope. The formation of the independent republic did not at first change the status of education. During the first decades of the new era the religious orders continued in charge of the schools, high and low, to the entire satisfaction of all concerned. The State willingly granted subsidies for their improvement and extension. But during the latter half of the nineteenth century conditions changed. The idea of secular education which should be free to all and required of all, developed in Latin America, as it had slowly developed in Latin Europe. Education for the State, by the State, without reference to the ecclesiastical organization or to specific religious instruction, was abhorrent to the tenets of the Church, and it resisted to the full extent of its power; but in America, as in Europe, the State triumphed. Public secular primary schools were first established, then high schools; and the universities also were in time wholly secularized. This struggle long continued alienated and embittered the two powers, and the doctrine of complete separation of Church and State gained added force. It is a bit fantastic that the animosity should be reflected in school curricula, but such proved to be the outcome. Since the State had undertaken public instruction, it must perforce make its schools popular. The Church schools had remained classical and conservative. The State, in contrast, made its schools scientific and practical. Latin was the central, all-pervading feature of ecclesiastical education. In order to discredit this education, the study of Latin was decried. Latin was the



official language of the Church; to teach it in the secular school was almost like teaching an ecclesiastical subject. Again, if Latin were recognized as an important study, the state educator could not compete with the clerical, since the best Latinists were the clergy themselves and the members of the religious teaching orders; and to admit into the secular teaching corps and to give Latin its pristine position in the role of education would be but to transform the new secular system into the old ecclesiastical school. The outcome of the struggle was the entire elimination of Latin from State-supported and subsidized schools; and when it was no longer required, or even 'credited,' for the baccalaureate—a state-conferred degree—it naturally disappeared from the private schools as well."

## VII — LATER PHASES—SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

### *Summary*

The civil wars of 1850-1867 were inimical to schools. An educational decree was issued by Maximilian in 1866. This was nullified by his downfall. The dominance of French ideas resulted in the adoption of the essentials of the French system. The period from 1870 to 1910 was one of rapid development. The Federal District and the States alike worked for the promotion of schools. Lack of system and efficiency in municipalities caused the states to be more active. Primary schools received attention first of all. Illiteracy was reduced to 75 per cent or lower. Coahuila and Jalisco illustrate contrasted practices in school management. In the first the municipalities carry all the financial burden; in the second the State. In 1906 the Federal District showed a school population of 11 per cent. By 1910 the proportion in all the Republic was probably  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. A summary of the situation in primary education. No special place has been made in Mexico for the high school. Preparatory education may be looked on as preparation for college or for professional studies. It has there been given usually the latter meaning. The *Institutos* correspond to the French *Lycées*. They offer a few college studies. Some of them included in professional courses. Dr. Brandon quoted. Professional and technical education has been offered by some of the *Institutos*. Engineering is taught as well as law and medicine. Industrial schools have been established by most states. They are largely for outcast boys. Normal schools also are found generally under state control. They are related directly to the primary schools. Their courses cover high school studies, with a few added technical branches. They are attended chiefly by poor boys and girls, and have to supply board and lodging as well as free tuition. The University of Mexico was founded in 1553. It consisted of faculties of letters, law, medicine, and theology. The professional departments tended to absorb the others. It survived under the Republic till 1867, though with varying fortunes. The professional schools continued separately. Recently efforts have been to revive it. Dr. Brandon quoted. Private schools divided into mission schools, Catholic schools, and special schools. A résumé of the three classes.

THE civil wars that were almost continuous from 1850 to 1867 effectually prevented any formal and stable legislation in regard to schools, and thwarted and checked the zeal of the apostles of education who in various spheres nevertheless labored on in the great cause. In several of the states liberal governors sought, about 1859 and 1860, to

bring to the aid of republicanism effective school systems, and laws were elaborated to that end. But the besom of the French Intervention soon swept governments and schools together out of existence. In 1866 the Imperial Government of Maximilian issued a comprehensive, and apparently well-considered, decree for a system of public education covering the entire country. It was not carried into effect, however, as the government itself came to an abrupt end early the next year. An interesting detail is brought out in the history of secondary and professional education in Nuevo Leon, already referred to, edited by Professor Miguel Martinez. Touching upon this imperial law, one of the historians states that it provided for a division of the work of higher education between *liceos* and *colegios literarios*. So far as I have ascertained, this was the only effort ever made in Mexico to discriminate between the high school and the college. All other systems there, including that now in vogue, have provided only professional education above the high school. It is true that the *escuela preparatoria*, after the manner of the French lycées, often gives a more extended course of study than our high schools. The matter has in neither case been yet reduced to an exact rule.

Mention has been made of the influence of French ideas in Mexico during the early years of the Republic. Since that time French intellectual standards have exerted a profound, perhaps we might safely say, a controlling influence, upon the thought of the Mexican people. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, a tendency was already manifest among them to go to France rather than to Spain for ideas. This was given a powerful impulse by the new nationalism which followed the achievement of independence, and by the ill-tempered refusal of Spain to accept the new political situation. Within a decade the young men who had occasion to go abroad for education were going to France, the French language and French fashions had become popular, and the literature of France, fiction and poetry, as well as philosophy, began that domination of Mexican thought which has continued to this day. It has been a question of congeniality, of intellectual temperament. And in view of this, nothing was more natural



than that the French type should be the model for the educational system in Mexico.\*

The forty years from 1870 to 1910 were, for Mexico, a comparatively peaceful period. Under the constitution the states were sovereign in educational matters. The Federal Congress legislated for the capital city and the Federal District, as well as for three large territories. The educational schedule approved by it had a measure of recognition as setting a type to be imitated. But several of the states appear to have been quite as alert and progressive in educational matters as the Federal Government itself. During the long interval of quiet and of rapid material development under President Diaz, beginning especially with his second term in 1884, there was ample opportunity for perfecting educational plans, both in administrative and in financial provisions. The student of the educational history of that period—of which there is an abundance of documentary material—will be impressed with two or three outstanding features. He will note, for a time, a tendency that had already often showed itself—to reform and rearrange with great minuteness the systems, both as to the category and number of schools, and as to courses of study, text-books, hours of recitation, and routine in general. It was only after a good deal of further experimenting with these paper plans, that it came home to legislatures and governors alike that the really essential and fundamental elements of a school system are funds and teachers, and that until these demands are provided for, elaborate programs are of little service. Toward the end of the period, therefore, there came marked activity in the development of state normal schools. This was the second notable phase of history. Another, perhaps even more transcendent, was the serious attempt to solve the financial problem. During all the long period of the country's poverty, due to the almost continuous prevalence of war, the matter of supporting schools had been perforce referred to the municipalities. The result was that the stronger cities and

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\*The French system prevailed, however, only in the primary and professional schools. The *Escuela Nacional Preparatoria*, the pattern of the *Institutos* of the states since 1867, has been (at least till within these last years) a very peculiar institution. It is the work of the constructive genius of Dr. Gabino Barreda, who embodied in that school the main ideas of the scientific classification as expressed by August Comte.—E. A. C.

towns managed, by one device or another, to keep alive their schools, no matter whether Centralists or Federalists, clericals or liberals, were in power, no matter whether these municipalities constituted a sub-section of a state or of a department. But the villages and the poorer towns, poor in leadership, as well as in money, did nothing at all. They had no schools. The cloud of ignorance which darkened the country's sky when freedom came still brooded over them.\*

Thus it came about that the states found themselves compelled to intervene more directly in educational matters. The municipalities were not only prone to neglect the work, when pressed by poverty, but they were equally disposed when they undertook it to go their own gait, disregarding any provisions of the state law that did not suit them. It was easy for the State to order, for example, that all children from seven to fourteen years of age should attend school. Who was to see that the law was carried out? Equal liberties were taken with other provisions—length of term, courses of study, salaries of teachers, and the like. The result was a chaotic condition in many of the states which was the despair of educational leaders. The more vigorous intervention of the states in the educational affairs of the municipalities had thus its justification, not only in the supplementing of meager incomes, but also in the regularizing and inspection of the work done. State aid was extended on condition that state laws should be carried out; and systematic inspection, the school census, truant officers, and other machinery for enforcing those laws, came in due course to be installed.

Following this general view of the modern period, we are ready for a more detailed exhibit.

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\*All the important measures were usually undertaken in the various states as a result of federal initiative. This was especially the case during the last fifteen years of the Diaz régime. Reports of contrary character may be attributed to a feeling of "regionalism" or "provincialism," of which there is all too much evidence in Mexico. At the National Congress of Primary Education, held in Mexico City in 1910, Don Miguel F. Martinez showed that out of a total expenditure for the current year of 10,261,240 pesos in behalf of primary schools throughout the Republic, some 3,322,728 pesos represented the expenditure of the Federal Government for the primary schools in the Federal District only. This fact showed the primacy of the Federal Government in primary education.—E. A. C.

## A—PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1. *Primary Schools.* Elementary schools have properly received more attention than any other phase of public education. From the first the patriot leaders of independent Mexico have seen that the training of all the people in the rudiments of learning is essential to a democracy, and, being essential, is the duty and obligation of the State. Most of the repeated attempts at legislation, which our review of the century just closed has set before us, concerned themselves primarily with elementary education. The task was and is in Mexico a gigantic one. Only a beginning has been made. Somewhat pessimistic estimates, emanating from Federal sources, have even in recent years placed the illiteracy of the Mexican people as high as seventy-five or eighty per cent. This is probably too high. The charge, oft repeated since the passing of the Díaz régime, that that somewhat autocratic executive and his associates were never really friendly to the cause of popular education, is vigorously repudiated by his friends. Señor Chávez assures the writer that there is abundant material to show that the efforts made by President Díaz and his supporters in behalf of education were numerous and far-reaching in effect. The history of education during the last ten years of the Díaz régime has never been written, but the real leaders in this field, among whom Señor Chávez particularly cites Don Miguel F. Martínez, have always been ready to acknowledge their indebtedness to the administrative agencies of President Díaz for moral and material assistance.

Early in the present century the project for a centralized federal system of schools began to receive serious consideration, but its definite inauguration was constantly postponed. It was understood that President Díaz himself disapproved the idea. Since the passing of the Díaz régime, Señor Chávez states, this idea has been revived, particularly in the matter of establishing a system of *escuelas rudimentariás*, for the teaching merely of the Spanish language, reading, writing, and arithmetic. Such a limited program can not be said to constitute a *system of education*.

At this point it may be well to note the fact, which Professor Chávez considers of fundamental importance, that from



the very beginning of its independent existence, Mexico has given to public education full recognition in the presidential cabinet. Up to 1901 national educational affairs were under the control of the *Secretaría de Justicia e Instrucción Pública*. By the Act of May 19 of that year there was created an independent branch of the cabinet, known as the *Subsecretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes*. Owing to its rapid development it was made a full secretaryship by the law of May 16, 1905. The recognition thus afforded the cause of education—a recognition that in point of honor surpasses that afforded by our own Government—is justified by the following figures, if from no other point of view. In 1895-96, five years before the creation of the separate department, there was expended through the *Secretaría de Justicia e Instrucción Pública* and the *Ayuntamiento de México* 1,225,248 pesos; in 1910-11, ten years after its creation, 6,970,056 pesos. (Fractional parts of a peso are in both cases omitted.) Of these sums the primary schools in the Federal District alone received, for the respective years, 414,675 pesos and 3,322,728 pesos. Including the Federal Districts, the total expended by the *Secretaría de Instrucción Pública* exceeded 4,039,000 pesos in the year 1910.\*

Despite this remarkable showing on the part of the federal organization, it is probable that the initiative, in primary education at least, will continue to be left to the several states. Even though the urgency of the situation following the present state of disorganization may force the central Government to extend its aid for the rehabilitation of the school systems, it is not probable that a centralized system of control will be adopted. That has been undertaken in some of the South American republics, but the evil effects of it in paralyzing local initiative and promoting paternalism have been patent. Professor Ross in his recent book on South America points out this as a mistaken policy. The relation of the central Government to that of the states may well be that which the better advised state governments sustain to the municipalities—one of coöperation, of supervision, inspection, and stimulating financial aid. Such ideas were expressed in a report presented

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\*Data furnished by E. A. C. from the official reports of Don Miguel F. Martinez and Dr. Luis E. Ruiz.

by Professor Chávez to the Minister of Public Instruction, Jose Vasconcelos, in January, 1915.

It is true that there has been no rule in this matter of the relation of the state and municipality. Those who in the future organize the public schools of Mexico will find precedents of all kinds. An example is the work recently carried on in two important states, Coahuila and Jalisco. In Coahuila the municipalities carried the financial burden and enjoyed practical autonomy, the state intervening only in the matter of the selection of teachers and inspection. In Jalisco the situation is reversed, the state providing everything except the housing for the schools. The rehabilitation that will certainly take place as soon as constitutional government is restored will doubtless follow the lines laid down by previous study and experience. The public school systems of the Mexican states are not destroyed, but simply in abeyance. The national educational conference of 1889 fixed more or less permanently the schedule of studies and the standards of administration. Afterwards there was progress, development, but no fundamental change.\*

The system thus generally adopted seems open to criticism at one or two points. The attempt to finish primary training in six years, for example, either puts too heavy a strain on the average student, or leaves a gap between the grades and the secondary school. Proper training for high school students seems to require at least eight grades, meaning in the case of most pupils eight school years.

In the second place, it is, of course, inevitable that the rural and village schools should be incomplete. Often they can not be organized to supply all the grades. It seems undesirable, however, to make this deficiency a definite and probably permanent condition by drawing in law a dividing line at the end of four years. The tendency at once shows itself to make the distinction thus introduced between "elementary" and "superior" primary instruction one of quality,

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\*The last law of primary instruction enacted by the Federal Government in the Diaz period was issued August 13, 1908. It attempted to extend primary training to *seven* years, and gave an absolutely concrete character to the program of courses. It undoubtedly represents a very considerable improvement on the standards fixed by the educational conference of 1889. The influence of American models is very apparent.—E. A. C.

not quantity; of kind, not degree. The outcome of this is to give the student of the lower school the impression that he really is not expected or encouraged to go on into the high school. This is a situation that lends itself to the old discrimination between classes.

A report of the subordinate official in charge of primary instruction for the Federal District and territories giving statistics for the year 1906 was issued in two bulletins in 1907. Use is also here made of the report of the superintendent of primary instruction in the State of Coahuila for the same year, and a collection of statistics for the State of Jalisco for the year 1910. In 1906 there were in the Federal District 367 public and 219 private schools, with a total enrollment of 61,400. This is  $11\frac{1}{3}$  per cent of the total population. In the District and territories the total number of public schools was 557, with 59,351 pupils and 2,371 teachers. Adding the private schools, the totals were, schools, 837; pupils, 75,865; teachers, 3,458, and expenditures for the year, 2,250,000 pesos. The same report gives the total number of primary schools for the entire Republic as 11,519; teachers, 19,131; pupils, 738,813—which is 5.42 per cent of the population. The corresponding percentage is given for France as 14; Germany 15; England 16; the United States 18.

In Coahuila for the school year 1906-1907 there were 226 primary public schools with 499 teachers and a matriculation of 24,056 pupils. There were also 57 private schools with 3,634 pupils. The total outlay from the public treasury was \$351,658 (Mexican), of which all except the salaries and expenses of the state superintendent and inspectors was borne by the municipalities. The elaborate and interesting official report here referred to, shows the amount per student raised by the different municipalities, and the percentage of the total income of these cities and towns which was devoted to education. This percentage runs from 12.8, the lowest, to 91.2, the highest, averaging apparently about 40. The table is an impressive one for any inquirer who wishes some measure of the interest Mexicans take in the education of their children.

In the State of Jalisco there were, in 1909, 1,095 schools, of which 577 were public schools and 518 private. It is rather



suggestive that 190 of the private schools are classed as clerical —“*del clero.*” In these 1,095 schools were enrolled 102,060 pupils. (The report does not state the total population, so as to exhibit the percentage.) In this state, as noted above, the expense of the entire primary school system is borne by the state government, the municipalities furnishing only the buildings and the office expenses of local education boards. The State's outlay for primary instruction in 1909-10 was \$524,310.50 (Mexican).

Señor Chávez supplies the following data concerning primary schools in the Federal District, for 1910, the year which marked the high tide in Mexico's educational work. These statistics are obtained from the report of the *Secretario de la Dirección General de Instrucción Primaria para el Distrito Federal*, a subordinate official of the Department of Public Instruction:

Primary Public schools in the Federal District in 1910.....	436
Primary Private schools in the Federal District in 1910.....	235
Total.....	671
Teachers in the public primary schools of the Federal District in 1910	2,559
Teachers in the private primary schools of the Federal District in 1910.....	973
Total.....	3,532
Pupils in the public primary schools of the Federal District in 1910..	90,692
Pupils in the private primary schools of the Federal District in 1910	21,386
Total.....	112,078
Total expenditure in the public primary schools for the Federal District under the superintendence of the General Direction of Primary Instruction.....	\$3,322,728.50

As a special feature of the celebration of the first centennial of Mexican independence, it was proposed to hold a congress for all the primary teachers in Mexico. The Minister of Public Instruction accepted the proposal and the first *Congreso Nacional de Instrucción Primaria* assembled in Mexico City, September, 1910. At that meeting there were collected the most reliable data possible on primary, secondary, and normal instruction throughout the Republic. At the end of

the sessions Don Miguel Martinez presented a general synthesis of these statistics, from which Señor Chávez presents the following facts:

Total number of primary schools in the Republic in 1910 . . . . .	12,418
Total number of teachers in the Republic in 1910 . . . . .	22,009
Total number of pupils in the Republic in 1910 . . . . .	889,511

Don Miguel Martinez also reached the conclusion that the percentage of enrollment in the primary schools of the Federal District, 16.93 per cent of the total population, surpassed that of any other portion of the Republic. While this can not be compared fairly with the percentage enrolled in any of the countries mentioned above, it ranks next to that of the United States.

Summarizing our results as regards primary education, we may set down the following as the status just prior to the recent political disturbances:

1. The leaders of the Mexican people, political and others, are fully committed to the cause of popular education.

2. During the three decades of quiet, from 1880 to 1910, the school systems took form and had rapid development. There was so general an agreement as to type of school, courses of study, manner of administration, etc., that no radical change is likely to be introduced following the present revolution.

3. The schools generally follow the French rather than the American type,\* although American influence has been felt in the Federal District. The primary course is comprised within six years or grades, four of these usually called "elementary" and the two last "superior."

4. By common agreement these schools are "free, compulsory, and lay (or secular)."

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\*The schools have certainly followed the French rather than the American type in many parts of the country; but in Jalapa the German influence was important through the teachings of the distinguished Professor Rebsamen; and in the Federal District the group of kindergartens created during the last ten years of the Diaz régime are rather of the type of the American kindergarten, and the primary schools since the law of 1908 have introduced several distinctively American features. This law extended the primary course to seven years (as related in the preceding note) and pointed out the fundamental lines for prevocational and vocational training.—E. A. C.

5. They are sustained usually, as in our own country, by local municipalities, districts, etc., aided by the state and subject to state inspection and supervision. Federal funds have been used for schools in the Federal District more specially since 1896, which accounts for their exceptional progress.

## 2. *High Schools.*

Secondary education, the work of preparatory schools, means one thing when the "preparation" is for professional studies, and another when it is for colleges. In Mexico, and under the French system, there is really no distinctive place or institution corresponding to our high school. The French lycée, preparing for the university, grades rather higher, including a year or more of what we term college work. In Mexico the place of the lycée is taken by schools called *institutos* or *escuelas preparatorias*. These are central state institutions, which should correspond to our state colleges or universities, except that their grading is not as high. They are in grade of work really not far removed from our standard city high schools, and fulfill usually quite as much the function of high school for the capital city in which they are located as that of "college" for the entire state. Through lack of rigidity in entrance requirements and courses of study, many of them fail to reach the level of the corresponding French institutions.

They do, to be sure, attempt some college studies. Their courses are a mixture. Many of the students are getting ready for professional work, and shape their studies accordingly. But, as has already been pointed out, the chief defect about the plan of bridging thus the gap between primary and technical studies is the fact that the primary courses cover only six years. If students enter the high school after only six years of grade work, the high school course must be graded down accordingly. In the Mexican system the attempt has been made to remedy this by extending the secondary course to six years. The professional courses are lengthened, also, and made to include college as well as technical branches, six years in law and medicine being at times demanded.

How the problem will ultimately be solved can hardly be foretold. The simplest plan would seem to be to lengthen the



primary course. Despite the excellence of the French system, and the feeling that is gaining ground in the United States that in both high school and college we are demanding too much time for cultural studies before professional training begins, it is likely that American influence will be felt in the Mexican educational system of the future. Many teachers from that country will secure their higher training in our schools, and will, even unconsciously, adjust their work in some measure to the standards prevailing here. Either there will be a separate development of the municipal and private high schools, or the primary schools will be made to include more grades, so that the *institutos* and allied private establishments may, like the French lycées, become a kind of junior college. The latter would seem to be the line of least resistance.

On the general subject of preparatory education in Latin America, Dr. Brandon, whose admirable monograph on Latin-American universities has already been referred to, has a comprehensive paragraph (p. 22):

"Secondary education in Latin America usually covers six years and is based on an elementary school course of equal length. In a few countries the elementary course extends over seven years, and in some the secondary school is reduced to five. The two school periods never exceed twelve years, and in some nations comprise but eleven. It is not the province of this work to treat of secondary schools, but in order to define somewhat the university entrance requirements it may be said that the Latin-American high school offers less in mathematics and considerably less in laboratory science than the corresponding institution in North America,\* but, on the other hand, it regularly includes such subjects as psychology, logic, political economy, and philosophy. In very few countries are the ancient classics taught, but everywhere much importance is given to modern languages, and at least two are included in every high school course that leads to the university. The secondary school curriculum is, therefore, comprehensive, and the student should enter the university possessing a reasonably broad mental vision. The age of the *liceo* graduate is about the same as that of the American boy when he finishes the high school. The Latin American is perhaps superior in breadth of vision, cosmopolitan sympathy, power of expression, and argumentative ability, but, on the other hand, perhaps inferior in the powers of analysis and initiative and in the spirit of self-reliance."

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\*The mathematical studies in the *Escuela Nacional Preparatoria* in Mexico City have generally reached from advanced arithmetic to analytical geometry and infinitesimal calculus. The teaching of the laboratory sciences was considerably improved during the last ten years of the Diaz régime, often following as standards the institutions of the United States and Germany.—E. A. C.

### 3. Professional and Technical Schools

The faculties of jurisprudence and medicine were components of the early colonial universities. For a good while licenses for these professions could be secured only in the metropolitan university of Mexico City. Later, as population increased in the provinces, charters were issued—in view of the difficulties and expense of travel to the capital—for various provincial schools of law and medicine. At different periods in their history some of these faculties, along with those of Mexico City, acquired much fame because of their members who were men of real scholarship and skill in their professions. It is not important to the present purpose to enter upon a detailed study of these institutions, past or present. They will doubtless continue to be developed, as in the past, to meet the demands of a growing civilization.

Schools of engineering have not had so long a history. Most of the states, however, have begun to offer courses in civil, mining, and hydrographic engineering among the studies of their *institutos*. In Mexico City a School of Mines was founded more than a century ago. It has now become the *Escuela Nacional de Ingenieros*; and has had an honorable record, having sent out many famous engineers and mining experts. Among them Señor Chávez mentions a most efficient group of recent geologists, including many of those hydrographers who directed the recent drainage projects in the Valley of Mexico.

In addition to their merely cultural work—to its subordination, in fact—several of the state institutes have largely become technical schools. An illustration is the 1908 program of the *Instituto Científico y Literario* of the State of San Luis Potosí. It lays down a preparatory course of five years, and offers besides professional studies for the following callings: law, notary public, medicine, pharmacy, midwifery, mining engineering, topographical and hydrometric engineering, chemical assaying. The law course and the medical course each cover five years; the engineering courses four years; the others, three years. The document in question is merely the outline of courses, and gives no information as to the number of students taking them. The requirement seems to be that, with a few

specified exceptions, all who enter the professional courses must first complete the five years of preparatory work. The importance of mining and civil engineering in a country like Mexico is manifest. It has not escaped the attention of the legislatures there, and, no doubt, schools of engineering will continue to be provided to meet a wide and growing demand.

Mention should be made here of the *Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes*, and the *Conservatorio Nacional de Música*, which have had a long and noteworthy history in promoting architecture, sculpture, painting, and music, in all of which the Mexican people exhibit noteworthy talent.

#### 4. *Agricultural and Industrial Schools*

These are classed apart from the technical schools for a special reason. The Spanish *hidalgo* objected to manual labor as beneath his dignity. In an issue between going hungry and working, he would go hungry. This inherited pride has in some measure affected public sentiment in Mexico. Agriculture has languished and mechanic arts have stagnated. About the only effort to remedy this has been the establishment in various states of industrial schools for boys, and the introduction of manual training in some of the primary schools. Almost nothing seems to have been done in agricultural education. In view of the richness of Mexico's soil, the demands of a population of fifteen millions of people, and the peculiar climatic conditions under which agriculture must be carried on, the need for scientific agricultural training is self-evident. The impoverishment of the country following the current wars will make some development of this type of education peculiarly opportune. Here, as nowhere else, Mexico should learn from the United States—though even in our own country only a beginning has been made.\*

The state industrial schools have usually been primary boarding-schools for boys. They are apt to be under military discipline, and are largely correctional. Most of the boys are waifs or delinquents, and they are occupied in such arts as

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\*The real reasons for the poverty of the work done in agricultural education have been the extreme scarcity of properly trained teachers, and the facility with which the soil produces all sorts of crops in many parts of the land without extra effort. The old prejudice against manual labor practically disappeared many years ago.—E. A. C.



help to make the institution self-sustaining, and at the same time fit the students themselves to become self-sustaining citizens. The writer has had considerable personal observation of the *Escuela Industrial Militar* of the State of San Luis Potosí, a school which has been in operation since the very early eighties. It is housed in the cloisters of an old Augustinian convent. Carpentering, blacksmithing, printing, lithographing, and other industries are taught by practice. The school does all the state printing, lithographing, etc., and also outside job-work. It turns out handsome furniture and other woodwork. It is equipped with baths, playgrounds, machinery, etc., and maintains an excellent student orchestra. It is apparent that most of the other states have similar institutions, several of which have been in operation since 1867.\*

Manual training has been generally introduced in the public schools, but not greatly developed. It has been especially insisted on in the schools for girls. The lack of suitably trained teachers has, naturally, been the chief obstacle to its development. Señor Chávez states that since 1867 Mexico City has had industrial schools for both boys and girls that are not correctional. The school for girls had an enrolment of more than a thousand during the last year of the Díaz régime. At the same time several primary schools in Mexico City gave some vocational training.

### 5. *Normal Schools*

Any view of the educational situation in Mexico, past or present, is sure to bring out in strong relief two of its perennial needs, namely, money and teachers. As concerns the public school system, these are fundamentally one, since the training of additional teachers has long been purely a question of more funds.

The state normal schools, as a part of the public school system developed during the last four decades, concern them-

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\*The State of Chihuahua had such a school under the progressive administration of Governor Ahumada. Professor Cox, who visited the school in 1898 and describes it in the *San Antonio Express* for August 26 of that year, was informed that this and other schools of the state had at first followed the example set by the mission schools maintained in Chihuahua by the Congregational Church; but when the state officials subsidized these state schools liberally, they soon surpassed their church models in material equipment and in number of students.—I. J. C.

selves only with the training of teachers for primary schools. The normal schools are thus properly looked upon as an integral part of the primary school system. Most of the states have now provided such institutions. Zacatecas and San Luis Potosí dispute between them the primacy in time. Vera Cruz was very early given a place of prominence, through the work of Professor Enrique C. Rebsamen, who was later attached to the Department of Public Instruction.

It will be recalled that once or twice during the period covered by the Lancasterian system, provision was made for a kind of normal training for teachers. The central governing board at Mexico City had a school there, and several of the state boards followed its example. Mention has already been made of the provisions for free scholarships in a Lancasterian normal school made by a very early law of the State of Jalisco.

But official normal training did not begin to assume a systematic character till the time of the final inauguration of republican government following the French intervention. The more progressive states practically all began to make provision for the training of teachers in the early part of the seventh decade. It is needless to recount here the struggles through which the normal schools had to pass, along with every other department of the civil administration, by reason of the impoverishment of the country during a long period of warfare. Few of them made any considerable headway for a whole decade. In the eighties, however, began their reorganization and financial rehabilitation. By the time of the first national educational congress, in 1889, it was possible to reach a measure of agreement as to courses of study, methods of administration, etc. It is a matter of satisfaction that the states have so generally recognized their obligation to undertake this work. Though even yet a few of them have not organized normal schools, and though there is still among the schools organized a good deal of variation as to equipment in buildings, scholarship, and financial support, the system is fairly under way. It is not too much to say that it is the most vital element in the whole educational enterprise in Mexico. Sooner or later there should be one or more teachers' colleges for the training of teachers for high school work, normal

professorships, etc.; but the great task of preparing the young men and women who are to teach in the primary schools of the country must rest upon these state-supported normal schools. Some of the Protestant missions have very wisely devoted a part of their educational funds to normal training, especially for girls. This work has been made to conform to the official curriculum, and has been warmly welcomed by the state officials. Nowhere, as yet, have the states been able to train a sufficient number of teachers to meet the demands. And in no part of the Mexican educational system can outside help of a financial kind be introduced so easily and so fruitfully as at this point. Additional scholarships in the state schools or in approved mission schools would supplement effectively the efforts of the states to meet the demands for teachers that press upon them from every side.\*

The course of studies in the state normal schools covers usually four years, with an added year of practice, or five years with a specified proportion of time throughout the course given to teaching in model or other schools.† It embraces mostly the same studies required in other secondary schools, with special topics added. It will be recalled that the primary schools stop with the sixth grade, leaving two years of grade work to be provided for in the high schools. In some institutions a distinction has been drawn between training for elementary work and training for teaching the whole primary course, including the two years called "superior." A more general rule is to require all teachers to take the full course before receiving their title of "professor." This title is looked upon in Mexico as similar to that of lawyer or physician. It is at once a degree conferred by the school and a license extended by the state. It corresponds to the "life-certificate" sometimes granted in our country. The close co-ordination of

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\*A college for the training of high school teachers was established in the *Escuela Nacional de Altos Estudios* of the National University of Mexico in 1913. Needless to say the disturbed condition since then has not permitted this brilliant and earnest beginning to be developed adequately. A few well-organized courses have been continued.—E. A. C.

†Señor Chávez reports that the course of studies in the two federal normal schools of Mexico City has generally covered five years, not counting the practice teaching. The institution for men, visited by Professor Cox in 1911, was adequately housed and well equipped, with a faculty and student body apparently greatly interested in their work.—I. J. C.



the state with its normal schools is shown in the fact that the degree of the school is the state license to teach.

It has generally been customary to put the president of the state normal at the head of whatever state organization there is for administering primary instruction. This usually includes a system of inspection, and sometimes also the right not only to license but to appoint teachers. The system is an excellent one when conducted by a progressive and efficient man. Otherwise—when made a matter of politics, for example—it is apt to degenerate into a travesty.

The scholarships granted to students in the state normals, should, according to the judgment of those most familiar with conditions, barely cover the cost of board and lodging. The state usually furnishes the books and other supplies. Students and their families should be encouraged to provide clothes, pocket money, and other personal needs. It is true, usually, that the students come from the very poorest families. The well-to-do are not attracted to the profession of teaching: the pay is too small. They expect to enter more lucrative callings. Another reason is that the Church frowns upon these secular normal schools as the backbone of the whole "irreligious" public school system, which is anathema. This pressure on the conscience of the devout results in a measure of social ostracism, too; so that ultimately it is the very poor boys and girls, with nothing to lose, who brave all and go to the state normal schools.

The strong sentiment in favor of separate schools for the sexes, which has long prevailed in Mexico, affects the plans for normal schools, too. Nearly all the older ones are rigidly divided. But in a good many places scarcity of funds has made it so difficult to provide two buildings and two sets of teachers, that mixed schools have been tried. These, apparently to the surprise of all concerned, have been quite successful. Only girls of a good deal of character and force would front the prejudice and social pressure involved in attending such a school. Naturally, those of sufficient strength to do this have in the test shown also the poise and concentration necessary to take them creditably through a new and trying situation.

One of the first measures to follow the present disturbed conditions in Mexico, as soon as peace is again established, will be the rehabilitation of the normal schools. The people will clamor more than ever for teachers for their children, and they will refuse to be satisfied with makeshifts. The standards have already been raised, and the requirements to be met by one who assumes to teach are pretty generally known. It is to be hoped that henceforth in politics, as well as in pedagogy, the Mexican people will refuse to be satisfied with pretense and show. With the debilitated condition of the public treasury and the disorganization of civil administration, coupled with reduced production in agriculture, mining, and commerce, the states will face in this matter of normal training gigantic difficulties. Help rendered now will be help indeed.

## 6. *Universities*

The University of Mexico, and that of Lima, Peru, were authorized the same year, 1551. They are, therefore, the oldest institutions for higher education on the American continent. The school in Mexico has not had, however, a continuous history. Opened in 1553, two years after the royal authorization, it continued throughout the colonial period, and even survived the revolution of 1810-21. From the beginning it was occupied primarily with theology and jurisprudence, and therefore its faculty of letters became gradually a secondary matter. By the time that a separate national life for Mexico began, cultural studies were at a low ebb. The doctor's degree from the University of Mexico had become a matter of scoffing, and only the schools of law, medicine, and theology kept their prestige. Later, theology also gradually lost its hold, as the Church ceased to dominate in the Government; and only law and medicine remained. As these involved professional licenses, they became in time the football of politics, and thus at last the University fell upon hard lines. Once or twice it was suppressed, then revived. Finally, just following the French intervention, it was dissolved into its constituent parts. The school of medicine remained, and the school of law, and also the engineering school, but the University ceased to be. In 1910, on the occasion of the first centenary of national independence, provision was made for reviving it, but soon

afterward political dissensions once more began, the Government of Diaz fell, and the plans have since been in abeyance.\*

Several provincial universities, were, as we have seen, opened from time to time in New Spain. They survive now in the state *Institutos* and in theological seminaries conducted by the Catholic Church.

On the general type of the Latin-American university, to which those of Mexico, of course, conformed, one can not do better than again to quote Dr. Brandon (page 12):

"It is needless to look for individuality in these institutions. All owe their origin to the same influence, and their organization was essentially uniform. The Church was the prime mover in their establishment, although influential laymen holding high political positions contributed notably to their foundation. The principal object of each university was to promote the cause of religion in the colonies by providing an educated clergy numerous enough to care for the spiritual welfare of the settlers and to further the work of evangelization among the natives. The central department of the institution was the faculty of letters and philosophy, through which all students must pass on their way to professional schools. The latter were exceedingly limited in the colonial university. There was a department of civil and canon law, but the former was overshadowed in the ecclesiastical organization of the institution, and had to await the era of national independence before coming to its own. The university usually contained a professorship of medicine, but prior to the nineteenth century it was the medicine of the medieval schoolmen, academic and empirical. The one professional school that flourished was the faculty of theology. It was for it that the university was created, and to it led all academic avenues.

"Clerical in its origin and purpose, the colonial university was also clerical in its government. Theoretically the corporation enjoyed large autonomy, since it formulated its rules and regulations, chose its officers and selected professors for vacant chairs. But this autonomy was largely illusory. The professors were almost exclusively members of the priest-

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\*In 1911, the function of the preparatory school corresponding to our commencement was a brilliant occasion, graced by the presence of the Rector, the Minister of Public Instruction, and by the then Acting President, Señor de la Barra. Original poems, orations, instrumental music, and even fencing bouts, appeared on the program. Each student received his diploma personally from the Acting President. It is interesting to note that among the number there was a full-blooded Tlascalcan Indian, who received more than the customary share of applause. In answer to an inquiry Professor Cox was informed that it had taken him two years longer than the customary term to get the diploma, but that in recognition of his final success, his companions were giving him what we should term "the glad hand." Professor Chávez states that under the dictatorship of Huerta the authority of the University was considerably increased, but that since then it has occupied an anomalous position, at one time under the immediate control of the Minister of Public Instruction and at another under that of the Rector, according to the influence of either.—I. J. C.



hood, and as such owed implicit obedience to the bishop, and, in addition, the election of officers and new professors required the confirmation of the prelate. University autonomy was, therefore, carefully circumscribed by church prerogative, and its equivocal form of government has been transmitted with little change to modern times, except that the State has taken the place of the Church. Several universities of the colonial era owe their foundation to one or another of the great religious orders. In these cases the order equipped, manned, and directed the school, subject, of course, to papal authority and to the immediate oversight of the bishop.”\*

## B — PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Under this head are grouped not only the schools due to individual initiative, but also the two large classes of church schools, those maintained by the Catholic hierarchy and those established and carried on under the direction of Protestant mission boards. Concerning the latter a brief monograph has already been prepared. It seems to cover that subject with sufficient minuteness for our present purpose, and it is therefore inserted without change.

### 1. *Mission Schools*

Educational work from the first has been an important part of the propaganda of the various Protestant boards (mostly American) sustaining work in Mexico. These missions were established, most of them, in the seventies and early eighties. In those days there was only a beginning of public schools, and anything that the missionaries undertook in the way of schools was heartily welcomed. The people were pleased, and even the Government looked with favor on these undertakings.

Mission schools have naturally fallen into three general groups: (1) the primary day schools, (2) the mixed primary and secondary schools, with both boarding and day pupils, the work sometimes advancing to include high school or preparatory grades, and (3) the special schools, usually normal and theological.

Of these groups the first gradually gave way, especially in the centers of population, before the advancing efficiency of

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\*There is a profound difference between the old University of Mexico and the new one, as shown by the spirit and breadth of teaching and by the point of view. It is the difference between scholasticism and science; between medieval times and the twentieth century.—E. A. C.

the public schools. It is still employed to great advantage, however, by many of the mission stations in the villages and smaller towns. The demoralization resulting from current revolutions will bring a renewed demand for this simple and effective agency. The cost is slight—the chapel or rented hall used for worship serving, also, as schoolroom, and a young Mexican teacher having entire charge. These schools reach children of the very poorest classes, the people who have no social standing to sacrifice, and result often in developing most promising material in most unexpected quarters.

Boarding-schools for girls have been especially effective. Mexican families like to have their daughters in an institution where they are both taught and cared for. These girls' schools, of which almost every denomination sustains several in Mexico, have succeeded in reaching well-to-do families, as has no other mission agency. The teaching of English and of music, as well as the scientific and modern instruction in other branches, has commended them to intelligent and educated citizens. They have been distinctly the most attractive institutions of their class. The public schools for girls are generally looked upon as plebeian, and the Catholic schools were rather inefficient. In only a few of the larger cities were there private seminaries. Thus it has come about that these schools have been well patronized by people able and willing to pay substantial fees for tuition. The work ranged from the primary and even kindergarten upward, rarely extending above the eighth grade, and was projected on the American plan and, in many instances, carried on in English.

Boarding-schools for boys have not been equally popular. With the same outlay they might have done practically as well. But the women's boards of the churches devoted their funds almost exclusively to girls' schools, and there was no similar organization to concern itself with schools for boys. Money for such institutions was not easy to get. It was difficult to make them anywhere near self-sustaining. Parents were more willing to let boys take their chances in the public schools. Nevertheless, not a few successful boys' schools were carried on—combined boarding and day-schools, usually. They graded up rather better, perhaps, than the schools for girls, as

boys consumed less time in music and other extras. Still, very few of these carried any appreciable number of boys through high school grades.

The missionary institutions that did this high school or preparatory work, usually on the basis of the American plan of grading (though the French system is employed by the Mexican state schools), were for the most part those of the third class, the special schools for training preachers, teachers, and other workers. Two or three really excellent normal schools for girls were developed. They adopted usually the standard state program of studies, and their graduates became accepted and acceptable teachers in the public schools. Of these graduates there was never a tithe of the number demanded.

The training schools for ministers and other workers—the sexes remaining rigidly separated through the whole course of schools—have usually been compromise institutions. They were designed to bring about prompt and practical results, and their courses of study were usually a mixture of preparatory, college, and theological branches, in such proportions as seemed to the managers to promise the best outcome. Some of them attempted formal seminary courses—usually, it must be allowed, on a rather flimsy foundation. In others emphasis was given primarily to the usual high school and early college subjects.

Such were the Protestant educational institutions in Mexico. It is to be feared that the wars have pretty effectually wrecked them, especially the most substantial and prosperous class of them, the girls' boarding-schools. However, many of these own valuable properties, and doubtless they will be rapidly rehabilitated when peace returns. These Protestant educational plants, especially the boys' schools, have exercised an influence on the life of the people all out of proportion to the money and attention given them. The number of real leaders coming to the front during the present disturbances, purely through personal merit, who got their training in evangelical schools, is most surprising. It shows that had Mexico had for the past three decades one or two genuine *colleges*, their influence now would be decisive. Doubtless



the effects of the training of large numbers of girls are equally substantial and valuable, though not so readily appraised.

## 2. *Catholic Schools*

Even after the revolution of 1821, the Roman Catholic Church in Mexico continued, as we have seen, in a quasi-official relation to the Government. Such educational work as was undertaken for two or three decades was largely under its supervision, and the teachers were mostly monks, priests, and nuns. When at length the final separation between Church and State was achieved, it was accompanied by collisions so violent that much hostility resulted. A profound distrust of the ecclesiastical leaders was engendered among the men who were, or became, members of the Government. The Church thus lost its place of intellectual leadership, and it has never regained it. Its case in the matter of education was made all the more difficult by the abolition of the religious orders. The monasteries and convents had been headquarters for the schools. They supplied both the teachers and the school-rooms. Deprived of them, the clergy were helpless. Practically nothing was left for them but a few theological seminaries, and in the cities primary schools here and there, and an occasional academy, housed in private quarters, or sheltered in the cloisters of some old convent building that by private generosity or governmental connivance was still in their hands. Many of these primary schools, however, grew to considerable proportions, leading in some cases to the violation of the law in regard to persons under vows living in the same house. The theological schools and academies were usually slenderly patronized.

During the later years of the administration of President Diaz, the enforcement of the law against monastic orders was very lax. Troubles in Italy and Spain sent many monks and nuns to Mexico; and the Jesuits especially went vigorously to work again to build up schools of higher grade. The people are even yet disposed to place their children in the care of the Church. This is especially true of the wealthy families. Hence all these schools prospered, despite the fact that they were in a measure illegal. The expulsion from Mexico of foreign monks and nuns by the revolutionists of 1913-1915 has

caused much adverse comment. But it should be recalled that these men and women were in Mexico in direct contravention of the law. Until the Catholic Church is prepared to develop lay teachers, and to adjust its educational work to the principle of complete separation from the State, and of absolute submission to law, it will continue to encounter stumbling-blocks in Mexico.

### 3. *Private Schools*

The demand for education in Mexico is so active that in almost all the cities of that country competent teachers have built up successful and lucrative private academies. Many of these have been aided by the good will of the Church authorities. Their claim on public attention has been partly in their select quality, partly in their emphasis on religion, but mostly in the superior ability of their teachers. Like private schools elsewhere, they have tended to rise and fall with the personality of the teachers who built them up.

Another distinct class of schools has attained a considerable measure of success, especially in the larger cities—the commercial school or business “college.” Like its counterpart among us, this school has offered a course combining theory and practice, and has reached a standard of efficiency that could be taken as a measure of the competence and conscientiousness of the principal. Nearly all these schools emphasize—besides the usual bookkeeping, shorthand, and typewriting—the study of arithmetic and of English. As promising an easy road for young fellows into salaried positions, they have been well patronized.

## VIII—ADDITIONAL TOPICS

### *Summary*

Three topics are considered: revenues, supply of teachers, demand for education. The public income in Mexico has suffered from a defective system of taxation rather than from want of resources. The country is rich, and with a proper administration will be independent. There will be no lack of teachers. In spite of the low wages, boys and girls of the poor class better themselves financially by teaching, and improve their social standing, too. Candidates will be numerous enough, but nearly all will need financial help. The present revolution has been a great national awakener. The people feel their ignorance, and are amazed by it. They will clamor for schools for their children.

#### 1. *Public Revenues*

It will not have escaped observation, throughout our study, that the severest handicap on education in Mexico has been lack of funds, although Mexico is a country rich in natural resources, and by no means over-populated. But from the beginning of its history it has been exploited. Unjust systems of taxation and dishonest administration together have deprived the public revenues of their just share of the country's products. By the same token inordinate measures of those products have flowed into private channels.

In the very beginning a current form of favoritism to the colonists whom the King of Spain especially wished to reward, was to exempt their properties from taxation. Many large estates thus came to yield nothing to the public. In a brief period also the ecclesiastical orders and the various dioceses were among the large property-holders, their possessions, of course, being likewise exempt. In the same way mines just opened were favored, and farms that had not yet, according to their owners, become productive. Thus during all the colonial period the wealthy escaped, and all the burden of raising revenue fell upon the poor. Since the establishment of the Republic there has been no great improvement. To encourage new enterprises—factories, railways, and the like—many corporations have been relieved of taxation, for long



periods of time. The state legislatures have been usually under the control of the men who own the large landed estates. The consequence has been that it has been almost impossible to secure the passage of laws taxing land. Through one pretext or another—usually on the ground that the land is not yet sufficiently improved to produce a surplus—the large *haciendas* have been allowed to go practically free. Even stamp acts and other devices for producing internal revenue can be evaded if there is connivance between the local officers and the citizens. It is upon commerce, upon the small commerce of the poor, especially, that the burden has usually fallen.

The poor of Mexico are very poor. It is impossible to wring from them large amounts, no matter how they are taxed. Unless there is to be a successful attempt at making the wealth of the country contribute to the country's support, public service in education and elsewhere will be cramped in the future as it has been in the past. The recent wars have impoverished the whole country. Much property has been dissipated, a great deal taken out of the Republic. Recovery will be slow. Yet there is reason to believe that the people of Mexico have at last learned by experience. All signs point to a readjustment in this matter of taxation, once peace is re-established.

There is every reason to expect that with such a readjustment, and with time given for the rehabilitation of industry, revenue for the needs of the people will be ample. In the interval, however, it is evident that outside financial help will be not only welcome, but most fruitful and efficient.

## 2. *The Supply of Public School Teachers*

It has already been brought out that in Mexico state normal schools must find their students among the poor. These schools have been subjected to a sort of double pressure. On one hand the Church influence has been thrown against them. Many of their teachers have been extreme liberals. It is difficult in that country to cherish such sentiments and remain in good standing as a Catholic. Often these teachers solve the problem by breaking with the Church entirely. They are thereupon ranked as skeptics, infidels, and even atheists, and

parents are warned against sending their sons and daughters to the schools in which such men teach. So heavy is the pressure that the young people who persist in going are virtually excommunicated. Naturally in that case they follow the example of their teachers, and become pronounced unbelievers. They do this not so much out of choice, as making a virtue of necessity. It is a necessity that seems peculiarly deplorable in the case of the young women.\*

On another side is the social pressure. People who feel themselves to be of the "upper class" do not like to associate with their inferiors. The state normal schools, like the public primary schools, have appealed especially to the poor, the people who are unable financially to take advantage of private institutions. This has made a sort of social atmosphere, the tendency of which is to restrict the attendance upon state normals to representatives of families that have virtually no social standing. Yet the instinctive attitude of the Mexican mind is one of respect for teachers. The calling is honored and for itself. And even the slender income of a public school teacher is greater than the usual earnings of the men and women in the poor families from which these boys and girls come. It is clear, therefore, that despite the religious difficulty, the young women and young men of those families that are at the bottom of the social scale will continue to enter gladly upon the career of teaching. It not only satisfies their intellectual cravings for an education, but increases their income and, ultimately, improves their social position.†

It would seem that this so-called lower class affords material as promising as any other in the Republic. Indeed, these boys and girls may be superior to those of the "better class." They

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\*This is not the case, however, in the schools of Mexico City. There is no general sentiment on the part of Catholics against the normal schools, although these schools are really non-sectarian. It must be added that the teachers, particularly in the Normal School for Girls, are almost invariably deeply respectful toward all the creeds, and that in recent years Catholic and Protestant girls have taken their studies in the Normal Schools of Mexico City in a mutual and constant relation of genuine cordiality.—E. A. C.

†This observation also is not strictly true of the schools in Mexico City. As a matter of fact there are in the private schools boys and girls of the richest families, with many of the middle class and a few of the poorer. On the contrary there are in the public schools of all grades, and particularly in the preparatory school and in the Normal School for Girls, representatives of all three classes. It is true, however, that the Normal School for Boys has practically only very poor students.—E. A. C.

possess more physical stamina, as a rule, a more vigorous will, and a more open mind. They have fewer prejudices of which to divest themselves, and have all to gain and nothing to lose by devoting themselves whole-heartedly to their chosen calling. Needless to add, the supply of them is inexhaustible. Mexico will never want for teachers, if only provision can be made for their proper training.

### 3. *The Demand for Education*

It may be assumed that Mexico is awake today as never before. The rapid shifting about of the men in the armies—followed by numerous women and children—has itself broken up provinciality and given large segments of Mexico's population their first conception of their own country, and of the world at large. Telegraphic communication has become a commonplace. It has brought the people of all parts of Mexico into touch with the whole Republic, and even with the world beyond. Newspapers have gone everywhere, loaded with startling and critical news. The man that could not read has felt himself set aside, ignored. He sees himself falling behind in the race. He has never thought of this matter that way before. He burns with longing and regret. He promises himself that his children shall never be humiliated and degraded as he has been. The school system of Mexico has lately been interrupted and held in abeyance, but the whole nation has been going to the school of experience. They have reached the hopeful stage of seeing and confessing their ignorance.

There will now, therefore, be a new and mighty demand for education. The transition is as radical as that which took place in China when the old order of training was set aside in favor of "Western" learning. China exchanged one kind of education for another. Mexico will change want of education for education, contented ignorance for an imperious thirst for the things of the mind. She is the victim today of many ills of many kinds. At least she is convinced that she has been victimized chiefly because she is ignorant. The awakening is a tremendous one. She is getting ready for that eternal vigilance which is the price of liberty. For a hundred years she has tried somnolence and indifference. Now she will



watch, and to watch she must have her mind's eyes opened and trained.

There have been, and are, many diagnosticians of Mexico's troubles, each with a remedy. The American people have of late shown much uneasiness under their sense of responsibility. The Monroe Doctrine has kept them awake at night. But they see that nearly all of the proposed ways of "intervening" would do harm and not good. Outsiders had better keep out of family jars. It is time that those who would really help the Mexican people should consider the matter of helping them to educate their children. That, if done in the right spirit—that is, without sectarianism or partisanship—is an "intervention" that Mexico will welcome. And it will do good and not harm.

## AFTERWORD

WHAT, then, is the way out? What is the duty of the Mexican people? And what is the duty of Americans as their neighbors? It would be foolish indeed to propose, especially at this time, a solution of the Mexican problem, but it is not foolish to try to learn what their history teaches us of their needs.

The Mexican thinks he wants only liberty and land, but what he really needs is education. Though he has been struggling for liberty for a hundred years, he has failed because he lacked intelligence and character. Universal education is the great need of Mexico. It is the first, last, and only remedy for her national disease—the only hope for the Mexican Republic.

Does the proposal of universal education for Mexico seem absurd? Why is it more absurd than the proposal to educate the Cuban, the Porto Rican, or the Filipino? It should not be more hopeless than to educate the Indian or the negro. No doubt it will require a long time even to start the necessary schools; it will certainly be the work of generations to qualify these thirteen million ignorant people for intelligent citizenship. But education offers the only method of making men fit to be free.\*

Believing, then, that the Mexico of the future must be built by its people, and that they have little to contribute to its structure but their native intellectual and spiritual abilities, I have sought to get a just estimate of them from those who know them best.

A native Mexican who was educated in Massachusetts and who has taught in the United States as well as in his own country, where he was head of a large college and superintendent of public schools of a State, assures me that the Mexican peon is the equal intellectually of the Italian, the Hungarian, or any

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\*Some paragraphs are used here from an article by Charles W. Dabney in the *Outlook* for March 22, 1916.

of the other immigrants among us, and fully as capable of self-government. A Protestant missionary teacher, who spent thirty years in Mexico at the head of schools, and is now connected with one of our universities, testifies that the Mexican peon has all the qualities for citizenship in a republic, if he were only educated and given a place on the land. The superintendent of one of the large petroleum companies of Mexico, who has used the peon men for ten years, tells me that they are as teachable, industrious, faithful, and loyal mechanics and laborers as any men he has ever employed. The president of the largest Mexican railway system, who has employed these people for twenty years—as track laborers, shop mechanics, locomotive-drivers, and conductors, as well as depot agents and clerks—is warm in his praise of the common Mexican, who, he declares, needs only an education and a chance. Many other witnesses might be cited to the same effect. In the course of a wide inquiry into the character of these people, the only pessimists found were among business and professional men in Texas, New Mexico, and California, who have come in contact with the worst types of Mexicans—the poor laborer seeking work, the border trader, usually a smuggler, or the cattle thief and bandit. Those who know the common Mexican best and in his normal surroundings, believe him to have the making of a man and a citizen.

In addition to elementary education and training for citizenship, Mexicans, of all men, need industrial and agricultural education. Although Father Hidalgo started his revolution in protest against interference with his industrial schools for the people, schools of this type have made little progress. But they are the great need. Agriculture and the mechanic arts in Mexico are very primitive. The rich man objects to manual labor as beneath his dignity. Technical and industrial schools are needed to overcome this sentiment. And practically nothing has been done for agricultural education. In view of the richness of the soil, the wealth of other resources, and the need of men to develop them, industrial and agricultural education would seem to be one of the most important tasks before the Mexican people.



Yet Mexico has no college or university of the modern type. She needs intelligent leaders, but she has no institution to train them. One of the best possible things, therefore, that could be done in Mexico, while helping her to start her elementary, agricultural, and industrial schools, would be to give her an independent college of the type of Robert College of Constantinople. By independent, I mean a college on a foundation approved by the people and the friends of Mexico, but independent of both Church and State control.

The advantages that would accrue to Mexico from a college of such a character are too evident to need argument. Its influence on education, on politics, on industry, and on morals would be all the greater because of its independence. Only such an institution would command the support of all classes and parties. Only such an institution can train among the Mexicans the wise, unselfish, and independent leaders the people need.

We have pledged ourselves to lead the other nations of the Western Hemisphere in making democracy a workable principle of government. At our door we have fifteen millions of people who, through ignorance and the habits that come of ignorance, have failed to differentiate liberty from license and have subordinated federalism to factionalism. Mexico can not have a free and ordered government while the great masses of her people are illiterate. A democracy must be based on an organized public opinion, and such a public opinion is possible only through a system of education which, while it trains in the industrial arts, also disciplines the character and develops leaders of scope and vision. The best aid one can give a man is to help him help himself. The best thing the American people can do for the Mexican people is to help them to educate themselves.

CHARLES WILLIAM DABNEY.









